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H. WALTER BARNETT.

LADY GERARD.

Hyde Park Corner.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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On account of the regulations of the Postal Authorities, the index to Vol. XIX. of COUNTRY LIFE is not included in the body of the paper, but it will be forwarded free to subscribers by the Manager upon the receipt of a stamped and addressed wrapper.

In answer to numerous enquiries, we beg to state that the article entitled "The Evolution of the Tankard," in our issue of September 8th, was by Antonio de Navarro.

FARM RECORDS.

FEW will question the advisability of anything that tends to obviate discussion or litigation, and therefore the example of the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture deserves to be warmly commended. This body has had under discussion the making of farm records in connection with the valuation of farm covenants and dilapidations, and about the middle of last year it appointed a committee to discuss the question with the Norfolk Tenant Right Valuers' Association. There is no need to insist upon the importance of the subject, considering the way in which it is raised by the Bill now before the House of Commons. But it is not wholly on account of that measure that the matter ought to be considered. Under the law as it at present stands a great deal of friction would be avoided if records were kept in the manner suggested by the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture. In point of fact, it has practically adopted the suggestion made by Mr. Hunter Pringle in 1893, when, as assistant commissioner to the Royal Commission on Agriculture, he reported on the counties of Bedford, Huntingdon, and Northampton. At that time tenant right had not come before the public in the acute form in which it has recently been presented. All the greater importance, therefore, is to be attached to the outline drawn up by Mr. Hunter Pringle. We can only wish that he had been one of

those people who had lived before, as the information contained in such a document would be of inestimable value to those who came after. On some farms it is true that wonderfully detailed records have been kept. But for this, Mr. Wilson Fox would not have been able to get together such masses of information as have been given by him about rates of wages, food, and kindred subjects, as these things were half a century ago. The proposal before us would, if carried out, enable the farmer to have before him a brief history of every field he cultivated.

A primary difficulty, of course, would be that of fixing what Mr. Hunter Pringle calls the par value, or average condition. The Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture is of opinion that this cannot be defined in any other way than by taking each case on its own merits. The schedule then would form a complete description of the farm; the condition of each field would be described in accordance with its previous history, treatment, or cropping. Thus, in the event of any discontinuation of lease or tenancy, it would be possible for either landlord or tenant to have a tolerably exact report drawn up by the district arbitrator or some other qualified official. This report, made up on the lines of the original schedule, would become a valuable document for the assistance of the official arbitrator when adjudicating for compensation at the end of a tenancy. It would enable him to determine with comparative ease whether the land had deteriorated or improved during a tenant's holding. Here comes in a vital distinction in the proposal as made by Mr. Hunter Pringle. We generally hear a great deal about compensating the outgoing tenant, but very little about the landlord. Mr. Hunter Pringle says: "Compensation should be given to the tenant who has improved the condition of the farm, or the landlord whose property has deteriorated according to the evidence of the schedules." The objection to this lies on the surface. Those who have done least justice to the land are at the same time the least likely to be worth powder and shot. The tenant has fair security for receiving this compensation, the landlord has comparatively little. With respect to unexhausted manures, Mr. Pringle suggested that compensation to the outgoing tenant should form a separate and distinct part of the award, and be governed by scales arranged by the boards of assessors.

Here, then, we have the nucleus of a scheme of farm records that would be of the utmost service if practically carried out. That seems to be the opinion of the committee of the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture. They have drawn up a draft form of record which would give particulars "field by field of the crops for the preceding three years, descriptions of soil, area, cultivation, tilth, cleanliness, manurial condition, condition of farm roads, fences and ditches, depth and distance apart of drains, condition of outlets, and general effectiveness. It should also contain a general statement as to the condition of fences, ditches, dykes, and gates immediately anterior to the commencement of the tenancy; of the sums spent in previous years in artificial foods and manures; and of the straw or green crops sold off the premises." It is scarcely necessary to dwell on the merits of this proposal. The whole subject of compensation for improvements has been irritating chiefly from want of definition, and it is a fundamental principle that the less left to individual judgment the better. If a farmer could state what compensation was due to him in pounds, shillings, and pence, and show as convincing evidence as is generally given when a bill is presented, there would be no grounds for dispute. But questions like those of unexhausted manures have a certain vagueness that leaves a great deal to private judgment, and this is the primary cause why friction is so often generated. If, however, an exact record were kept of the agricultural history of each field this would go far to define the legitimacy of claims. Incidentally, the proposal shows how closely modern farming is connected with book-keeping. No enlightened dairyman would refuse to admit the advisability of keeping exact records of the milk production of his cows. He knows that without books excellence in his calling is unattainable. And it is pretty much the same in other departments of agriculture. The modern farm requires, in the first place, a head to think and plan; in the second place, bone and muscle to perform the necessary labour; and in the third, a good supply of clerks for the purpose of registering and recording.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Lady Gerard. Lady Gerard is a daughter of the late Sir Martin Gosselin, and was married to her cousin, Lord Gerard, on Monday last at the Brompton Oratory.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



• NOTES •

MANITOBA has set an example that might be usefully followed by every other part of the King's dominion beyond the seas. The Government has decided that on and after January 1st, 1907, every school that receives a public grant from the Treasury of this province must have the Union Jack flying from it during school hours. The importance of this step can scarcely be over-estimated. Into Canada, as into many other of our Colonies, are flocking not only subjects of King Edward, but men and women of almost all nationalities under the sun. There is a danger that the inhabitants should become a merely heterogeneous mass of individuals without any general patriotic point of union. It was a danger that threatened the United States, whose individuality, it was feared at one time, might be obliterated by the mixed ingredients with which it was flooded. The Manitoban Government, then, has taken a step in the right direction. The flag flying over the schoolhouse will be a symbol of which the meaning will be known to all. It will signify that, though the protection of the Government will be open to everyone who takes up his residence in that part of Canada, the people will be blended together in one nationality, and that they will live under the protection of the Union Jack. It would be difficult to imagine anything more likely to inspire the youth with patriotism, especially if it be followed, as we hope will be the case, by kindred steps with the same object.

Sir James Crichton-Browne has often spoken a timely word to the country, but seldom has he done anything more useful than was accomplished the other day in his defence of hobbies. The nature of our commercial pursuits exacts the performance of very monotonous tasks by many of our workers. Often enough have examples been adduced of hands in a boot factory whose sole business day after day is to prepare a certain part of the uppers, and of the factory hand whose only business in life is to watch the working of a certain part of his employer's machinery. At a first glance, one would think that solitary confinement could scarcely be more cruel, but what prevents these people from becoming automata is the nature of their relaxation. From one point of view it is easy to laugh at such hobbies as those of collecting postcards, stamps, or even butterflies. But if such a pastime takes the mind away from the task that has been occupying it nearly all the day, it must be a wholesome corrective of an evil influence. For there can be no denying that monotony and uniformity are prominent dangers of the age. Every observer must have been struck by the fact that working men to a great extent inhabit houses of exactly the same pattern, rise at the same time in the morning and cease work at the same time at night, travel by the same omnibuses, tramcars, or railways, and in every way tend to resemble one another in a grey monotony of existence. A hobby is the natural relief to this.

The speaker went a step further when he entered upon a defence of cheap newspapers. His point was that without such publications life would be narrow and self-centred, petty and insignificant interests would alone occupy the attention—the newspaper has at least the merit of taking the reader out of himself and of bringing in the wider world of interests. It is a great gain to any man when he possesses the faculty of thinking about subjects not directly connected with his personal welfare. In this way cheap literature offers exactly the same distraction as

the music-hall, or any kindred place of amusement. To recognise the fact does not at all mean that we should be content with things as they are; on the contrary, it shows the great advantage of deepening and purifying the better interests, so as to oust those whose effect is not wholesome. No one who has the welfare and progress of his fellow-men at heart will feel that the scope of his activity is at all circumscribed by anything that Sir James Crichton-Browne has said. On the other hand, it may help to give this activity a more useful direction.

Mr. George Wyndham is one of the few statesmen who are possessed of an intimate love of letters, and there was a personal passage in the address on education which he delivered at Hawarden the other day that will be read with pleasure. He called to mind an occasion when, walking with the late Mr. Gladstone in the park of his Cheshire home, the conversation turned upon the abolition of the tax upon knowledge, as it was usual to call the duty upon paper. Mr. Gladstone confided to him that in abolishing this his great hope was that it would lead to a cheaper issue of "the big books, the good books, and the wisest books." But he confessed to a considerable disappointment, as many printers had got into the way of using the cheapest possible paper, and his belief was that in the course of a century many of the books now published would be reduced to dust. No doubt there is a considerable amount of truth in this. A great deal of printed matter has come from the press since Mr. Gladstone was in his prime that can only be described as cheap and meretricious rubbish; but, on the other hand, he seems to have forgotten at the moment the vast number of cheap and beautiful editions of old masterpieces that the publishers have been able to produce. The poorest to-day may read the best literature that England has produced in legible print and on good paper, so that the aged statesman would appear to have been in a vein of pessimism scarcely warranted by the facts.

MOWING BRACKEN.

But yesterday, on autumn woodlands brown
Was glint and gleam;
And sparkling, bracken-clad, the hills sloped down
To seas of dream.
Now all is changed. The sea lies grey and chill
Neath wintry skies;
And in dank measured lines across the hill
The bracken lies.
Upon the hill-crest, broad of limb, and lithe,
A yeoman stands;
Regards the bracken and the gleaming scythe
Held in his hands.
Not his to note the sadness of the day;
Nor less nor more
Than swift the fragrant brake to bear away
For winter store.
And such is wisdom; for, when months go by
Joy it will be
In byres and places where the cattle lie
The brake to see.
And sweet to catch that haunting odour rare
Which brings to mind
The sunny days, the songs far-off and fair,
The sea-borne wind.

F. W. SAUNDERSON.

As brought out in a Blue Book issued on Monday, the general features of railway traffic during the past year have been of a satisfactory nature. More capital than usual has been expended, and the returns have been better. As has been the case for several years in succession, there is an increase in the number of first-class passengers and third-class passengers, but a decrease in those of the second class. The income from the carriage of excess luggage and parcels also shows a satisfactory increase. In the goods traffic the principal thing to be noted is the general policy which seems to have been pursued by the various companies. This is to run much heavier trains than formerly. There is accordingly an increase in the total weight of goods carried and in the money returns, but a decrease in the total number of trains. No doubt this matter has been one of difficulty to the various companies, and the method adopted is the more economical; it is in accordance with the principle which has frequently been enunciated here, viz., that the best rates are always obtained when the customers of the railways can guarantee a full truck and a regular supply. By this means the greatest possible amount of work can be accomplished by the smallest expenditure of energy, mechanical and human.

The secretary of the Metropolitan Gardens Association has issued a powerful plea in favour of the trees on the Embankment. Many of us join with him in regret that the London County Council should have decided to lay a tramway along the

Embankment at all. Hitherto it has been one of the most agreeable promenades in London, with the river on one side and a leafage on the other, that brought a country charm to town. But unless some protest is made it is evident that the trees are bound to suffer. If the ordinary heavy cars are to be used, no doubt it will be considered necessary to lop the principal branches, and in any case the excavations are certain to interfere with the root growth of the trees. How they have done so well in the past in unfavourable circumstances has been a marvel, but it is hopeless to expect that they will continue to flourish unless great care is taken in the construction of the tramline. The suggestion made by Mr. Basil Holmes is that light single-deck cars, such as we see abroad, should be used instead of the "lumbering, noisy, ill-ventilated structures" introduced by the London County Council. To adopt this suggestion would be, at all events, to make the best of a bad bargain. It would give the trees a chance, and, perhaps, obviate the utter destruction of the charms now presented by the Embankment.

To see Mr. Frederic Harrison's signature at the bottom of a letter is to realise that the eye and ear are going to be refreshed with a flow of such English as comes from few other pens at this time of day. His eloquence is seen at its very best in a letter, contributed to a recent issue of *The Times*, dealing with the Alps. Mr. Harrison's chief point is that Englishmen are to a degree forgetting what is most valuable in Swiss scenery. Athletic boys and mannish girls go there to perform feats on the ice fields, and "go home as blind and unconscious of its historic relics and its lovely landscapes as a St. Bernard dog or a Chamonix mule." He does not at all under-value feats of athleticism, but his desire is that in this the greater good should not be missed. Mr. Harrison speaks with heartening enthusiasm of the glory of Swiss scenery. "There is no such air," he says, "no such sport, no such transfiguration open to man on this earth." And he ought to know, for he says that, during a period of thirty years, "I have drunk it all in to my very soul"; while at seventy-five he wishes only that he were able to try it again without imprudence.

Undoubtedly there is a tendency on the part of the middle-aged English man and woman to be, or affect to be, *blasé* about the Alps. They do not care to be seen at Zurich, Lucerne, or St. Gallen because they are places which everyone has "done." Those to be met with there are indeed polyglot in their nationalities. But Mr. Harrison, with the wisdom of an ancient sage and the vigour of youth, tells us all to go to the Alps not because we wish to climb, but for their beauty and changing impression in colour, vegetation, and composition of landscape scenery. He has a word to say for the quaint antiquities of the old Swiss towns of the lower country, and even for the "institutions and edility" of Zurich. Especially he draws attention to the national museum of local antiquities. "Its fifty rooms," he says, "record the evolution of the national life from the age of the lake dwellings to our own day." It is good to read such a letter, and in the first place it makes us wish that we could be in the Alps instead of in London at the present moment, and in the second place it makes us envy those who have had the unparalleled good fortune to visit that delightful country with a companion so enthusiastic and stimulating as Mr. Harrison.

In the interests of true sportsmanship it is a pity that a squabble about Australian cricket should have been carried on when the season is over. Everybody admits that the past year has been most interesting, the county championship was fought out with an amount of pluck and spirit that left nothing to be desired, and the very absence of a team from Australia seems to have been a benefit rather than the reverse. At any rate, the number of spectators at the leading matches has scarcely ever been surpassed. But after the middle of September it is time to put the bat aside and to turn the attention to other games. When that is done both the public and the players will be in a position to commence their season next year with renewed zest and freshness. But the practice has become much too common for clubs and associations to wash their linen in public. If disputes arise it would be much better for the controlling boards to settle them as best they can with a minimum amount of publicity, instead of the maximum that they now seem to aim at.

At Kirkcudbright, a bloodhound was successfully used last week to find a woman who was missing. The woman was a Miss Campbell, a school teacher, who had disappeared from her father's house after hearing that she had failed to pass an examination. Mr. G. A. J. Oliphant, the master of the Shrewton (Wilts.) bloodhounds, was telegraphed for to assist the police, and responded by bringing the well-known hound, Chatley Bonnybell, who won the championship at the Kennel Club field trials on Salisbury Plain last year. The circumstances were all against the hound, the scent being already sixty hours old when she was laid on, and the crowd which came to watch the

performance continually interfering with her. None the less she followed what proved to be a very complicated and difficult trail over some seven miles of ground to the river's bank, where the scent ended. This she did twice. On the two following days the country-side was searched far and near, both with hounds and by human workers, but no new trail was found. At last the police were prevailed upon to drag the river at the point indicated by Bonnybell, and the body of the missing woman was discovered.

While the fishermen of the South Coast are being so greatly concerned about the action—or, at least, the threatened action—of the Admiralty in fixing targets for naval gun practice in Start Bay, the fishermen at the Northern extremity of our islands have their grievances also; and meetings are being held in Shetland to endeavour to put a stop to the operations of the whalers, which are said to interfere very seriously with the herring-fishing. The agitators point out, very justly, that, although the herring is so small and the whale so big, the national value of the whaling around Shetland is virtually *nil*, whereas the value of the herring fishery is very large. To the Englishman knowing nothing about the matter the first idea is apt to be one of regret that a set should be made against a picturesque and sporting calling, such as the whaling appears to him to be. There are romantic reminiscences, too, of thrilling descriptions in Sir Walter Scott's "Pirate." But these are not the considerations which weigh at all heavily with the fisherman when put into the balance against his means of livelihood.

A LANCASHIRE HARE.

Oh brown are the moors in the grey morning lying,
Where the west wind comes singing o'er wide sea and plain;
Oh blithe on the hills when the autumn is dying
The hound and the horn wake the echoes again!
Here's to the hills and the air—
To the winds that give challenge to care!
Here's to the sound of a Lancashire hound
And the speed of a Lancashire hare!
Oh hark, and Oh hark, to the sound of the hollo
Afar on the hills in the fall o' the year;
Oh hark, and Oh hark, to the hounds that we follow
How their full-throated chorus swells tuneful and clear!
Through the bent and the heather they revel and rally,
Their voices all chiming out gallant and gay;
A quest by the brookside, a view in the valley,
Then over the hilltop and for'ard away!
Oh gone are all burdens of sorrow and yearning!
Oh fast fly the hours that were made for delight,
Till red in the west like a torch dimly burning
The last gleam of day gives the hunter good-night!
Here's to the hills and the air!
To the winds that give challenge to care!
Here's to the sound of a Lancashire hound
And the speed of a Lancashire hare!

C FOX SMITH.

While in England the observance of Sunday becomes less rigid year by year, so that we are steadily travelling in the direction of what is rather vaguely known as the "Continental Sabbath," France has deliberately taken the English Sunday as a model, and is endeavouring to legislate the first day of the week into a Day of Rest in a sense quite new to Frenchmen. One of the last acts of the Chamber of Deputies at its recent session was to pass a law compelling all employers to give their hands a holiday on Sunday, exemption being made of certain trades and industries (including railway and steamship companies, restaurants, tobacconists, bathing establishments, etc.), which, however, are obliged in compensation to give each employé some other day off in the course of the week. It is a revolution larger than we in England, unless we chance to know our France well, can easily imagine, and the first Decree having just been issued by the Minister of Commerce in conformity with the law, all manner of difficulties and perplexities are arising.

Our contemporary, the *Spectator*, is to be congratulated upon the success that has attended its experiment in producing soldiers. Colonel Walsh, the chief recruiting officer for the British Empire, must be considered an authority. He declared at the last parade at Hounslow Heath that the men were wonderful, and he wished to secure as many of them as possible for the regular army. In doing this he only endorsed what had been said before by General French and other officers. Colonel Pollock, to whom the training was entrusted, has performed his part of the task marvellously. The deduction seems inevitable that much time is wasted in training our soldiers. They could learn their duties in a much briefer period, especially if they had officers like Colonel Pollock to take the oversight of their exercises.

On a good many of the smaller Scottish salmon rivers the owners have been trying the effect of conserving the water in time of spate, by a system, or series, of locks or dams, so as to be able to turn on a fair head of water later and so give fish a longer chance of running up. These experiments have been attended by so much success, in the direction of an increased run of salmon in these rivers, that there is reason to think that they will be

imitated elsewhere, provided the natural conditions make it reasonably feasible to employ them. It is, of course, only in the small rivers and in rivers that are held in one ownership or in a joint ownership of unusually harmonious partners, that such a scheme is workable. The operations of Mr. Lesseps are too large for emulation. But there is a great deal that may still be done very usefully in the direction in which these successful attempts point.

THE DESTRUCTIVE RABBIT.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

FEEDING.

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RABBIT-SHOOTING, as a definite branch of British sport, appears to be of comparatively recent origin. If one examines old game-books of about 100 years ago, one finds the entries about rabbits few, and the number shot was small and trifling compared with even a poor ordinary mixed bag of these later days. And, of course, the very simple explanation is that formerly the rabbit, prolific as it is, was fairly well kept in check by its natural enemies, hawks, weasels, stoats, *et hoc genus omne*; whereas now, not only has the balance of Nature been very much disturbed to its advantage, but the rabbit has become an object of special protection as a recognised and sometimes profitable kind of game. In fact, among other protected animals, the fox is, perhaps, the only one that helps to keep down rabbits, and that only to a very limited extent. One finds, however, that even before the close of the eighteenth century profit was found in rearing rabbits, at the expense of the Crown and the nation, and that at the same time this was the cause of very considerable damage to valuable plantations. The record concerning this, so far as I am aware, the earliest reference to wholesale destruction by rabbits is to be found in the eleventh report, dated February 6th, 1792, of the Royal Commissioners appointed to enquire into the state and condition of the woods, forests, and land revenues of the Crown, where it is stated (on page 14), with regard to recent oak plantations made in the New Forest, that,

out of a total of 2,274 acres of plantations throughout the perimeter of the forest, "about 800 acres are entirely destroyed by rabbits bred by the keepers for their own profit." In that particular case it is not stated in what special way the keepers found their profit; but it seems much more likely that it was by trapping and selling the rabbits for food than by making money out of them for shooting as a form of sport. But, in either case, it is clear that the damage caused was serious; and there can be not the slightest doubt that the same holds good to-day wherever rabbits are protected. Though small in size, they are voracious animals; and, whatever profit can be made out of them, either directly or indirectly, there must always be a *per contra* account in the shape of damaged crops either in field or woodland, and usually in both of these classes of cultivated land. This damage is seldom of such a character that it can be easily or exactly determined as to its nature and extent, or its amount valued straight off in pounds, shillings, and pence. One cannot reduce it to precise terms, such as three sheep to an

acre and one cow to three acres, or ten sheep to one cow, or anything like that, because I am not aware of any reliable feeding estimate having yet been made with regard to rabbits. But this has to be reckoned with, all the same, for the rabbit cannot be fed for nothing, notwithstanding all the other good qualities ascribable to it by those enthusiastic over this modern kind of shooting. Even though a landowner protecting



F. Martin Duncan.

YOUNG WILD RABBIT.

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rabbits may, perhaps, never be called upon to make any payment in actual coin of the realm, or by means of a cheque on his banker (though he sometimes has to do this in cases of serious damage to field crops), yet all the same he has to pay indirectly for the keep of the destructive rabbit in the shape of a smaller rent from his farmlands and of diminished income in his woodlands, and especially in his coppices and all young plantations; and each of these means a decreased capital value of the land as a producer of revenue.

Perhaps the following instance may well serve to illustrate what I mean. About a fortnight ago, on a large and very well-managed farm a few miles from Worcester, I was talking to the farmer about his land and his this year's crops, which he had just finished carting home the day before in glorious weather. He was fairly well contented with things in general, which is rather rare in a farmer. "But," he said, "if there were no rabbits on the farm the land would be worth over ten shillings an acre more than it now is." "Do I understand you to mean," I asked, "that if the rabbits were exterminated, and could be kept down entirely after that, you would be prepared to pay ten shillings an acre more rent for your farm?" "Well, no, sir, I don't say that I would; but I *do* say that if the rabbits were got rid of, the land would be well worth ten shillings an acre more every year." "But," I continued, "you can keep rabbits down now under the Ground Game Act, and if you don't want them to do damage you can shoot, trap, or ferret them." "That's all very well so far, sir," he replied, "but there is Lord C.'s big wood on one side of my farm, and Lord B.'s covert on the other, and the rabbits would always breed inside of them far faster than I could keep them down, so that it can't be done."

Now the man who thus expressed himself, without my in any way whatever having tempted him to speak of rabbits, is a farmer of a very high class, experienced, shrewd, energetic, and progressive, willing to sink money on improvements under



C. Reid, Wiskaw, N.G.

A HAPPY PAIR.

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guarantee of obtaining a fair valuation should his tenancy come to an end—a typical specimen, in fact, of the best of our English tenant farmers. Without adopting his opinion and his farm as a fair standard of the amount of damage done to field crops by ground game, it may, perhaps, be fairly taken as a proof that the destruction can often be much greater than might be expected by those not having opportunities to see day by day the way in which rabbits invade the fields as their habitual feeding-grounds. Suppose, we may say, that in this particular case the damage inflicted is fully twice as much as it usually is on farm lands, and let us also agree to discount this shrewd

farmer's *ex parte* estimate by another 100 per cent., that would reduce the average valuation of damage by ground game to half-a-crown an acre, which seems to me not at all likely to be an over-estimate. And, assuming further that only 30,000,000 of our cultivated arable and pastoral farm lands are really affected by rabbits—which allows a very large margin as altogether undamaged or only very slightly damaged—that would mean that on our cultivated farm lands in occupation throughout the United Kingdom the damage amounts to a virtual loss in rental value of £3,750,000 a year, representing, at only twenty years' purchase, a depreciation of £75,000,000 in the capital value of the land if it were to-day put up for sale by auction. And I am quite certain, speaking as a forester, that, taken all over as regards damage to coppices and other woodland crops, and including the expensive wire fencing necessary for the protection (not always successful) of young plantations, eighteenpence an acre, or £225,000 per annum (equal to £4,500,000 in capital value at twenty years' purchase), is a moderate valuation of the extent of damage done by rabbits throughout the 3,000,000 acres of our existing woods and plantations. Adding these two items together, this shows the total annual cost of the maintenance of wild rabbits in the United Kingdom to be nearly



F. Martin Duncan.

IN THE SHRUBBERY.

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£4,000,000, and equal, at twenty years' purchase, to a depreciation of about £80,000,000 in the capital value of the land if put up for immediate sale.

Presuming this to be something like a fair estimate, as it is, at any rate, a fair and unprejudiced endeavour to value, the question may well be asked if rabbit-shooting is a sufficiently noble and character-forming sort of sport to be worth this amount of individual loss to landowners, and of national loss in the diminished productivity of our farm lands, pastures, and woodlands. What amount of compensation have we in the form of food from rabbits? Are our landowners and is the nation itself so well-to-do that any loss thus incurred is of little or no importance? Much as I should like to draw out a fair balance-sheet, and place to the credit side the full value of rabbits as cheap food for the people, I cannot do so. I have no data to go on, and I am not aware of the true value of rabbits as food. Doctors of medicine should best be able to inform us if rabbits are clean, good food, or if there is any greater danger of ptomaine poisoning arising from the use of their flesh than from that of other animals slaughtered for human food. I only know that many people abhor rabbits, much as a Jew is supposed to abhor pork, as unclean meat.

With special respect to the damage done by rabbits in woodlands, there can be no doubt whatever as to its being very serious and widespread. Some years ago I instanced, in "Our Forests and Woodlands," several cases of irreparable damage having been done to fine old park timber at Belvoir and at Savernake, and quoted a case in Gloucestershire in which, in a wood of 100 acres, leased (along with other scattered coverts) to the Berkeley Hunt on the express understanding that ground game would be kept down within reasonable limits, the landowner was compelled to pay, in one year alone, £110 as compensation to the tenant whose fields surrounded this wood, while the youngest of the coppice in it was cleared in the preceding winter by rabbits, almost as clean as if it had been mowed with a scythe.

And I could add numerous similar examples of destruction that have fallen under my observation during the last four or five weeks in different counties in Central and Southern England. I could instance one case where stringent measures have for some years been taken to keep down rabbits, while recently, during the owner's temporary absence from England, relaxation in exterminative measures has led to their increase again, and they have even effected an entrance into some of the wire-netted plantations. And in another part of the country, where it is supposed there are some rabbits, but not many, there are just enough of them to have made expensive wire-net fencing, put up within this last year, practically useless for the successful protection of a young larch, oak, and ash plantation made in March, 1906, at a cost of nearly £10 an acre. The rabbits have effected an entrance in several places, and have (in spite of "smearoleum" freely applied to the plants in many dangerous parts) done much damage already, though the extent of summer nibbling is never so great as the destruction caused during winter, and especially when snow lies on the ground and is accompanied by hard frost. In two other mixed plantations, made within the last three or four years on the same estate, but in a part of it where there is no desire to preserve rabbits, between one-half and two-thirds of the plants have been killed, and attempts to beat up the blanks are almost a waste of money. Other cases, too, which I could cite consist of ash plantations, over large portions of which the crop originally planted was entirely eaten by rabbits in the course of one hard winter, while the wretched small poles now on the ground, and formed by shoots flushed from the roots, are hardly ever likely to be worth cutting for their own sake. In many of the ash coppices, and even in many of the mixed oak, ash, and hazel underwoods, the damage is also so great and so extensive as to give small chance of the coppice being worth cutting ten or twelve years hence. And that this damage is solely due to ground game, and to nothing else, can soon be clearly proved by adequately wire fencing small plots here and there, within which the growth will usually be something entirely different from what it is in the free, unenclosed, rabbit-infested woods.

There will, no doubt, be many who are of the opinion that the above rough jottings and calculations about the amount and valuation of the damage done by ground game are ridiculously over-estimated. Such persons will, of course, point to the fact that, under the Ground Game Act now in force, tenant farmers can shoot or trap hares and rabbits damaging their crops; and they will also triumphantly cite cases in which the farmers themselves sometimes preserve on a small scale, in order to have a little bit of sport now and again.

I would, however, merely point out that this only proves the farmer to be willing to pay for his own sport and amusement. When rabbits and hares ravaged the fields the loss was the farmer's, as no specific deduction in the farm-rent was stipulated for on this account, while the amusement or profit was the landlord's. But now that the farmer has the right to kill the ground game, his neglect to do so is simply his paying in kind for the indulgence of his sporting instincts. He has "to pay for his whistle," and he thinks "the game worth the candle"—that is all. But the destructive rabbit is not even then fed for nothing. A harder case is where the farmer does try his best to clear his farm from ground game and cannot succeed. He cannot possibly succeed in doing so, so long as rabbits are preserved on adjoining lands, and especially if these be woodlands. Even in the open parts of large estates it is only by systematic co-operation that the farmers can rid themselves of ground game wherever it be considered a destructive pest. And even then it would be impossible for them to effect their desire unless they shall be granted the right, or at any rate the privilege, to operate on adjoining lands; because if preserved on these, rabbits will soon again overrun the farm lands sought to be protected.

That rabbit-shooting is a perfectly legitimate form of sport for those who care for it, is undoubted. But in view of the destructiveness and the prolificness of rabbits, those who desire to enjoy it should be compelled to confine it to warrens enclosed in such a manner as to prevent the escape of rabbits from them; and it should be permissible for anyone to shoot, trap, or kill any rabbit found beyond the limits of such warrens. That seems to me to be the only way of preventing what is



F. Martin Duncan.

WILD RABBITS AT PLAY.

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really a serious national loss, while not unduly interfering with the legitimate right of a landowner to enjoy rational sport on his own estate.

JOHN NISBET.

FROM THE FARMS.

IN PRAISE OF LUCERNE.

OVER a large portion of England, and especially in the Southern half, the summer of 1906 will be remembered as one of severe drought. The corn crops have been good as a rule, the roots got a fair start, and even the hay crop, particularly in some counties, was not so very bad; but since haymaking the pastures and seeds have been burnt up and parched till large areas have assumed the appearance of an arid desert.

I have lately travelled over a wide stretch of country, westwards to North Oxfordshire, and eastwards through Essex, and in a tolerably long experience have rarely seen a more depressing state of things than that from which the graziers and the dairy-farmers are now suffering. There is literally nothing in the meadows for the cattle to eat, and the sheep, cropping close to the ground, are just keeping themselves alive, but sinking in condition day by day. At such a time as this it would be difficult to estimate the value per acre of a succulent forage plant which, in spite of such a drought as the present one, can yield two good crops of hay and then throw up an aftermath in the course of three weeks nearly up to the knees of the cattle. And yet we have in lucerne just such a plant as this, useful in any season, but in a dry summer simply invaluable. The secret of its ability to withstand a lengthened drought is the wonderful way in which it strikes its roots right down into the subsoil, often to a depth of 3ft. or 4ft. Forty-two years ago I grew a small patch of lucerne, and



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GOING TO THE BYRE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

quickly perceiving its value, I soon had thirty acres of it growing on a gravelly soil. It was able to find moisture, and produce abundance of fodder quite independent of the weather. Only last week, on a hill farm in Essex, I saw this plant behaving in exactly the same way, and after two excellent mowings, the third crop was keeping all the farmstock and providing a covert for partridges into the bargain. From May till October horses fed upon it will become fat and require no corn; whether as hay or green food there is nothing better for a herd of dairy cows; sheep of all ages thrive upon it, and young lambs will never scour, as they often do when weaned upon tares. Besides all this, it is inexpensive to cultivate, and once started with a good thick plant will last for many years.

A few hints with regard to the best treatment for lucerne may be useful, and those given are derived from personal experience. There are few soils on which lucerne will not thrive, but those of a warm and calcareous nature are considered the best, and a cold, retentive clay is probably the worst. The land intended to be sown should be autumn cultivated, cleaned thoroughly, and deeply ploughed or ridged for the winter. It should not be ploughed in the spring, as a fine surface is very essential for a seed-bed. It may be sown with barley or oats, but I should strongly advise otherwise, as the chances of a thick and even plant are far better when sown alone. The first week in April is the best time for planting, and the quantity of seed per acre should be at least 20lb. This may either be drilled or sown broadcast, preferably the latter, provided care be taken to ensure even distribution. The great point is to get the ground well covered, and if this be successfully done weeds will be smothered and the plant will be sure to take care of itself. It has been recommended to drill wide apart, and then cultivate with the hoe—an endless expense, which I think unnecessary. A word of caution as to close grazing by sheep must here be added. It is much better to allow the crop to grow and fold them on it than to graze it as you would clover or sainfoin, because by the former system the surface weeds are kept down. I have said nothing about manuring, but, although it is doubtful whether artificials are of much use, a good dressing of

farmyard manure, rendered free of the seeds of weeds by turning the heap, and put on in the previous autumn, will assist the young plants to start a rapid growth. With the liberal treatment advised, two fairly good crops will be produced the first year.

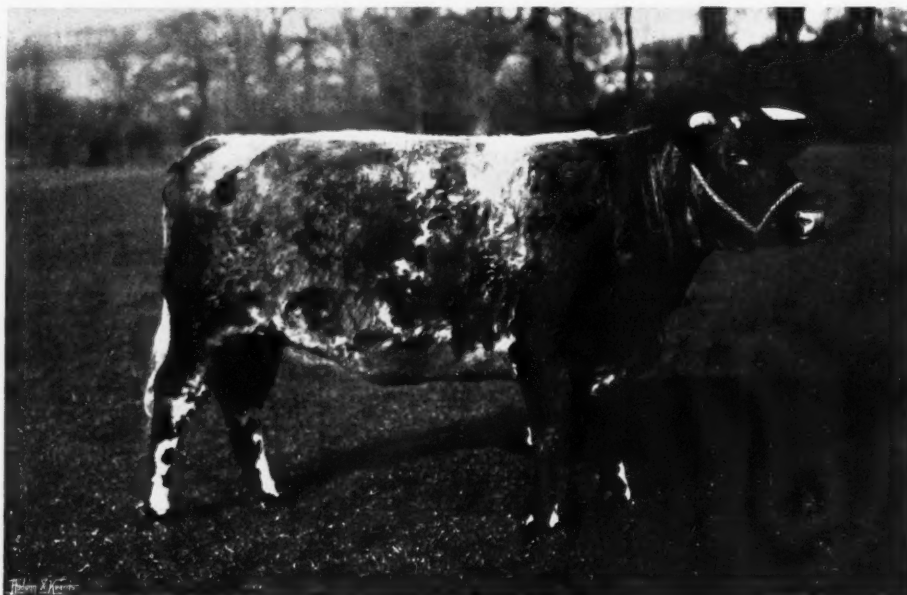
A. T. MATTHEWS.

PRICES AND PRIZES.

The curiously interesting communications which have been sent us by shorthorn authorities tend somehow to diminish the value attached to awards at agricultural exhibitions. The primary object with which these shows were started was for the purpose of assisting those engaged in agriculture to stock their farms with good and profitable cattle. Something, therefore, might be said for the reasonableness of the view that an animal which has received the distinction of a prize at an agricultural show ought *prima facie* to be a more desirable acquisition than those which have been either unnoticed altogether or received only commendation. But the inference from the opinions of the various experts which have been published is that the fact of an animal receiving a prize is no more than a proof that it has been looked upon favourably by a judge. It does not show that the animal is free from disease, is good to breed from, or that it possesses the attributes for which a buyer usually looks. As a consequence, there is a wide divergence between the verdict of those who go out to buy cattle and those who are called upon to judge them. Whether on general principles this is a testimony to the practical usefulness or the reverse of agricultural shows is a question that still awaits adequate discussion.

SHORTHORN JUDGES TESTED BY THE SALE-RING.

Generally speaking, whenever a show and sale of pedigree shorthorns is held some animals that do not figure in the prize-list fetch higher prices than some of those which the judges considered worthy of that honour. To persons not in touch with the trade it appears at first sight that the judges must have awarded the prizes to the wrong cattle. To take a case in point. At the recent Birmingham shorthorn show and sale the high prices obtained for some entries unnoticed by the judges or not "in the prize money" have been commented on by the Press. I quite grant that at any show where the entries are large (at Birmingham there were over 100 entries in some of the classes) there is much room for diversity of opinion and taste, and at this



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A SHORTHORN HEIFER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

particular show had there been different judges there would probably have been some different decisions; but I do think that in no other country in the world do exhibitors of pedigree stock have a fairer "run for their money" than in England. Judges are, after all, only human, and sometimes make mistakes; but in this country favouritism is practically unknown, and a judge who did not "go straight" or who did not know his business would soon find that agricultural societies would discontinue to invite him to act. Different judges have different ideals; for instance, one prefers a shorthorn of the Scotch type, another likes one of the Bates character; but apart from the fancies of individuals, whether they be judges or purchasers, there are several reasons why prize animals should not always sell as well as their less fortunate classmates. Supposing a man has to adjudicate where there is a class, say, of 100 bulls under two years old; when these bulls are led before the judge, each one carries round its neck, or attached to its halter, a number corresponding with a number in the judging book, in which, in addition, is written the age of each bull. This is all the information (and quite rightly, too) that is given to the judge, and he is requested to select those animals which he regards as the most worthy of the prizes on that day. Against this, what does the purchaser know when these bulls come into the sale-ring? He has printed in his catalogue the name of the owner and of the breeder, and also the pedigree of each lot, and one may be sure he is informed of every point that the owner or the auctioneer considers would enhance the selling value of the animals. Should two equally good-looking animals come into the sale-ring, one from a celebrated herd, or bred by a successful exhibitor at all our leading shows, the other from a herd recently established, or practically unknown, even if the latter animal has taken a prize and the former has been passed over, the one from the celebrated herd would probably make most money. Again, supposing there are two other shorthorns in the sale in shape, make, and character of equal merit, one possessing a most fashionable pedigree, and the other with only sufficient crosses of recorded sires to make it eligible for the Herd Book, the chances are that the aristocrat makes four times as much money as the plebeian. Colour, again, is a great factor in the value of shorthorns.

One sees very good individuals, but of bad colours, such as white, or glaring red and white, or some other unfashionable shade; a judge cannot overlook such an one if in shape, type, and touch it be more correct than its competitors; but most likely breeders will pay more for less correct specimens of a popular colour. The present high prices for shorthorns depend to a great extent on the demand of the Argentine and other foreign countries, and whether or not an animal is suitable for an Argentine buyer makes a great difference to its selling value. To satisfy an Argentine purchaser the sire and dam of every shorthorn he selects must, for a number of generations, trace back to a certain volume of Coates's Herd Book, and, above all, every head of cattle he ships must pass the tuberculin test. That a large number of experienced buyers and breeders do not believe that this test is of any practical use, except as a source of income to the veterinary profession, is too lengthy a subject to discuss now; the fact, however, remains that at present, whether or not an animal is sold or not "subject to the test" makes a great difference to its selling value. What an outcry there would be among shorthorn men if judges were handed the sale catalogue, were informed which of the animals were to be sold "subject to the test," and were requested not to give the prizes, necessarily, to those which they considered the best specimens, but to select for the premiums those which they anticipated would reach the highest figures at the coming sale. The value of an animal should be what it is worth in the open market; but at public auctions do the best specimens of livestock always make the most money? Does one never see pedigree stock, especially the younger ones, that have been forced and prepared for sale by an experienced feeder, make rather more than their full value? And again, does one never see very good cattle, perhaps not "in show form," picked up "in the rough," by an expert, at a very low figure. This same expert's judgment will, perhaps, be severely criticised on the next occasion when he undertakes the thankless task of officiating as a judge at an agricultural show. In conclusion, I may add that I was neither a judge nor a purchaser at the recent Birmingham show and sale, although I constantly judge and am judged at agricultural shows, and also buy, sell, and breed shorthorns.

W. N. F.

HUNTING WOLVES AND FOXES.

ALTHOUGH much paper has been blacked in England in writing about the wolves which so long roamed in mischievous liberty through the more inaccessible forests and mountains of that and the adjoining kingdom—as well as of the Principality whose tribute was once paid in the heads of these animals—not many Englishmen have more than the vaguest idea how the proscribed creatures were most often captured or killed. The wolfhound is, no doubt, a familiar object; but it may be doubted whether the writers or critics who hold forth upon his merits ever connect him closely in their minds with the services which he is or was supposed to render, and still more whether they could give a correct account of how he ought to be employed. Yet one would think that the hunting or even the trapping of so fierce and formidable a beast as that which made a sad end of Little Red Riding Hood would have been a subject worthy at least of honourable mention in any old treatise on field sports. Possibly the reason for the neglect of writers to describe the chase of the wolf may be found in the fact that his dead body,

when secured, was so utterly without value as compared with the stag, the buck, the wild boar, or even the hare. A similar consideration may account for the low estimation in which, until quite modern times, the fox was held as an object of the chase. When hounds began to be followed more exclusively for the mere love of sport than with the object of filling the larder or destroying a noxious brute, the fox was rehabilitated, and even promoted to a place which no one in the Middle Ages would have dreamt of supposing him fit to occupy. But before that epoch arrived it was too late to reinstate the wolf in a position which he must always have been well qualified to hold as a wary and difficult quarry. The same civilisation which raised hunting to the rank of a fashionable and popular pastime had involved the extermination of a wild beast whose mere existence in any country is incompatible with any real security for life and limb. If we go back still further, to times before the dawn of civilisation, we shall find that, naturally enough, a very low rank was accorded to the wolf, upon whose flesh even the hungriest savage would not be able to make a very delectable meal. The



A SERIES OF TRAPS.



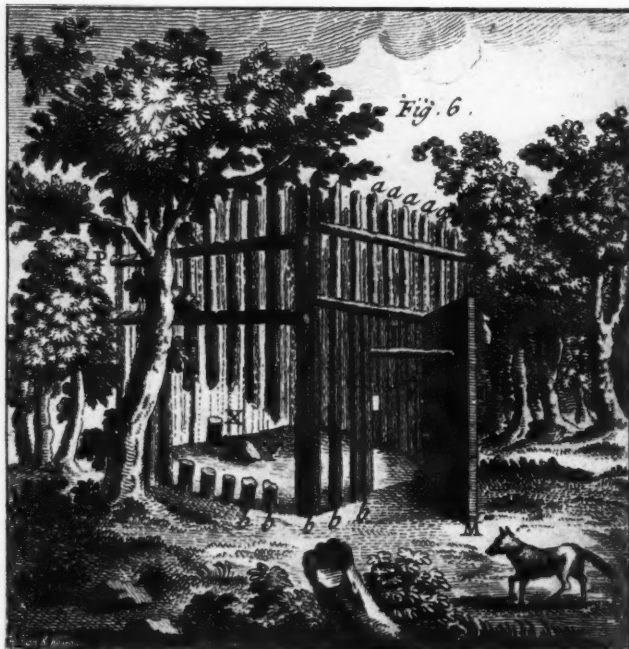
DECOYS FOR WOLVES.

motive for hunting the wolf would be almost purely defensive, and grounded upon the wish to make away as quickly as possible with a creature universally and very properly regarded as *hostis humani generis*, and deserving of no quarter. Consequently, all persons were from the first at liberty to pursue and slay a wolf in any place, provided that they did not in doing so trespass on preserved domains, such as Royal forests or chases. And every device was lawful which would ensure, even though in the most unsportsmanlike manner, the destruction of these unlovely pests.

The result is that the old books which give directions for the pursuit of the wolf, and also usually of the fox, mention a large number of traps and snares, and other summary methods of repression, more or less repulsive to the more cultured tastes of a later age. Probably the most primitive of them all is one for the construction of which the very rudest tools will suffice. This consists, in its roughest form, of a pit or excavation in the earth, which should have perfectly steep sides, up which a wolf or fox, as the case may be, cannot jump or climb—at least without some difficulty and delay. On the floor of the excavation a sheep or lamb, live or dead, is placed as a bait. In the case of a fox, of course, a fowl or duck may be substituted. The depredator, probably after a period of hesitation varying in length in an inverse ratio with the degree of hunger which stimulates him, may at length be rash enough to jump into the pit, where he can be put to death with arrows or stones or other weapons as he makes abortive efforts to jump or climb out. As, however, the beast must be exceedingly hard put to it for food before he will venture the fatal leap into so obviously dangerous a place, the open, undisguised pit was no doubt found to be effectual only in very rigorous weather or in exceptional circumstances. For ordinary times it was advisable to contrive a more cunning snare. The earliest of these is always supposed to have been the pitfall. And of these there were many kinds, varying in size and shape, according to the nature and stature of the beast for whose reception they were designed. Thus, for buffaloes and other heavy animals, which rush along in an impetuous march at the double when excited by fear, a mere trench of sufficient capacity was dug across their path and hidden from view by a

light platform or superstructure flush with the ground, covered by brushwood or other materials to resemble the ground of a jungle or forest. But in the case of more stealthily-moving animals, such as wolves or foxes, such a device would rarely succeed. A much more effectual pitfall, though simple withal, would be the circular hole, of which a representation is given in the left-hand top corner of the second illustration. In the middle of this hole a tall stake or pole is driven, so that its top emerges some feet above the level of the ground. On the top of the pole, on an old wheel or some other platform, is tied a bait, live or dead, which, either by its cries or by its odoriferous qualities, is calculated to attract the prowling robber. Round the pole, on a level with the ground, a flimsy structure of twigs or brambles is spread by means of supports which will carry no substantial weight. As the plunderer either approaches the pole with a view to jumping, or, after having made his jump, slips off and alights on the twigs, they give way and precipitate him into the abyss.

Our first illustration—taken from an old French plate—presents us with a whole series of traps requiring a little more elaborate preparation and construction than those already mentioned. Fig. 1 is a pitfall covered by a circular platform, which is poised on a sort of hinge in the middle, so that, under ordinary conditions, it remains in a flat position level with the ground. It will remain so even when a small object such as a piece of carrion is tied to one of its sides equidistant from the hinges on which it moves, but will not hold up any further weight. The bait is attached on the side furthest from that on which the intended victim is expected to come. As soon as, scenting the tempting morsel, he has got just beyond the central part of the platform, it of course gives way beneath his weight, and he falls headlong into the pit. In a skilfully-made apparatus the platform will then right itself, and reset itself, ready for a fresh capture. Fig. 2 represents on a larger scale the trap which is in our times often set for the capture of rats and mice. It consists of a plank moving upon a hinge at its middle, and unable to maintain its equilibrium when a weight is placed on any part of its further half. To the end of this half has been attached a fowl or other bait. The hungry four-footed adventurer comes walking



A MERCIFUL TRAP.

along the plank, and before he can reach the prize disappears, leaving the plank, freed from his weight, to swing up into position again. In these illustrations the most simple mechanism necessary for the desired object has been displayed to view. But it is easy to imagine how the framework might be supplemented and rendered much more effective by skilful garnishments of a simple and inexpensive kind. Thus the sides of the pit on each side of the plank and the sides of the circular platform, with the exception of the narrow part along which the enemy is to walk, can be adorned with twigs and brushwood. And the plank, or that part of the wooden platform along which the victim is to walk, may be strewn with sand or gravel so as to imitate more or less closely a path in the wood or jungle.

As, however, the trap is intended rather for night than day work, these elaborations—except on very moonshiny evenings or mornings—are not so necessary as might be supposed at first. With the barbarous machines shown in Figs. 3 and 4 we come to an age when springs had been invented. The one represents what we call a pole trap—still permitted in this country, which pretends to call itself civilised—and the other is meant for a sort of biting apparatus, of which the jaws snap to as soon as the wolf or fox has jumped up and taken hold of the suspended bait.

The next trap to be mentioned is as merciful and unobjectionable as the last named are cruel and hateful. It consists of a more or less comfortable apartment, with open-work sides, having a door shutting with a spring whenever it is free to swing on its hinges. This door is kept open or ajar by a light wooden rest, to which is attached a string communicating with the bait set in one corner of the hut. As soon as the wolf or fox, having entered the hut, touches the bait, a spring is released which, by pulling the string, dislodges the rest, and the door shuts to, making a prisoner of the intruder, who very possibly may not become aware of his fate until he has finished his meal and attempts to make his way out by the way he entered. It is obvious that in countries where the larger carnivora are still found this device might be usefully employed for the capture of specimens, absolutely uninjured, for menageries or zoological gardens.

For the hunting of the wolf, properly so called, some interesting instructions are given in the book from which our illustrations are taken. The pack should consist of twenty-five to thirty good dogs, which are recommended to be of a good height and grey in colour, with some red in the eyes and on the jowls. As the author maintains that no great expense need be incurred in this sort of chase it is to be presumed that the hounds were not required to be of any very



A FOX.

special breed. These were to be supplemented by six or eight couples of good greyhounds (formerly so called) and some of the animals known as house-dogs (doguins). There were to be two valets de limiers, two valets de chiens, and one valet pour la conduite des limiers. The hunt was considered to be more fatiguing for the lyme hounds than any other; and therefore a rest must be allowed to them at least every other day. The scent of the wolf is not as strong or as enduring as that of the fox or deer, and hounds are not very keen on it. Moreover, the young ones are apt to become very fearsome as they near the quarry, and must be well encouraged by the voice to persevere. When the wolf is about to be driven into the open it must be

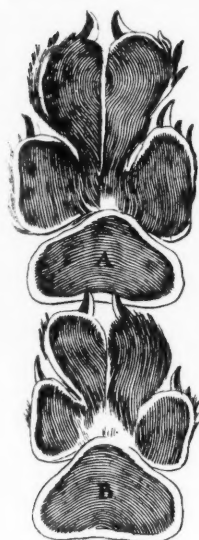
noted where he can be driven out and for what place in a neighbouring covert he is likely to make. Then a couple of greyhounds (levriers d'estui) must be posted near the place of exit, another pair (l. de tête) at the place of probable re-entry, and a third couple (l. de flanc) midway between—all the lot being carefully hid out of sight of the quarry. As soon as the wolf has got past the intermediate couple all the reserve hounds are slipped to assist the levriers de tête in tackling him before he can regain the covert.

The curée or funeral feast after the mort is not, of course, the same as that which concludes a stag-hunt. For the flesh of the wolf is very distasteful to all hounds, and it is important not to let them touch it raw, and so acquire a dislike for their work. Consequently, if the quarry is intended to be served out to the victors, its flavour must be disguised by the admixture of other rather strong ingredients, and mixed with a good deal of the fat of some other animal, with boiled water or milk.

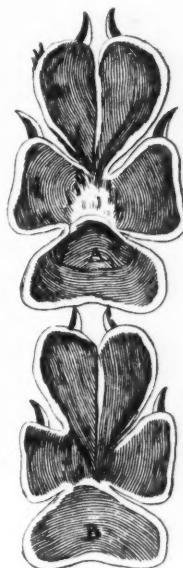
As for the head, it is cut off and held on high on a forked stick so that the hounds may jump for it in competition with one another, and so be stirred on by rivalry to fight for it and gobble it up without enquiring too much as to the taste. The other formalities, including the loud winding of the horns and the distribution of wands to the gentlemen of the hunt, are much the same as those in vogue in deer-hunting.

The brief notice taken by the author of fox-hunting acquaints us with the fact that this sport can be enjoyed by men of very moderate means. It is said to be tolerably amusing and very easy. The hounds and huntsmen hide in ambush till the quarry is driven out, and the pack, which is then let loose, follows with zest, as the scent is good, and "the fox is not so cunning as other sorts of quarry, and especially the hare."

Of the footprints depicted in the illustrations, one represents that of an old male wolf, another that of an old female, another that of a fox, and the last that of a badger (blaireau).



OLD MALE WOLF.



OLD FEMALE WOLF.



A BADGER

LYONESSE.

TO one familiar with the archipelago at the northern extremity of Great Britain that at the south offers in every respect a striking contrast. Standing on Wideford Hill, just outside Kirkwall one sees a multitude of low-lying heather-clad islands, on whose shores a tumultuous sea is breaking. At the foot is a prosperous town with a fine cathedral for centre. On the hill is a heap of white bones telling of great drives when a school of caving or bottle-nosed whales got entangled in the bay. The legendary atmosphere of Ultima Thule is Northern. Here, the antiquarian tells us, Thor and Odin yielded reluctantly to Christianity, so that Pagan and Christian antiquities blend curiously into one another. Maeshowe and the Stones of Stennis carry us farther back than Viking or Sea King, probably to the same period as that at which Stonehenge was set up. The people with their light complexion and fair hair remind us of their Scandinavian origin, as do the names both of places and persons. But how different in the Scilly Islands! Only one point of resemblance is clearly established. Here, as at the North of Scotland, the long Atlantic billows come rolling in to meet a choppy sea. The people, however, are spare and swart, a majority probably being of Spanish origin. Long intermarrying has fixed the type, so that it would be scarce possible to mistake an islander. None of the rocks is very high; not so high as, say, the Old Man of Hoy, but they are obviously volcanic in their origin—the result of Nature's wildest convulsion—and there is a splendour in

the wilderness made by their granite forms. The inhabited islands may be counted on your fingers, but the uninhabited swell into thousands. Nothing could be pleasanter than to cruise about among them in such weather as we have had this summer; but the sea is a very treacherous one. When thick mists come in from the Atlantic, spreading over dark rock and inhabited island, the most skilful pilotage is of little avail to the vessels that by ill-luck have got out of their course. At other times vessels are warned by the St. Agnes, the Wolf, and the Bishop light-houses; but in fog their only aid is the alarm gun discharged every five minutes on the last mentioned. It would be impossible to exaggerate the service rendered by this gun. With something almost approaching complaint in his voice, an old salt told the writer how comparatively few the wrecks had been since the mounting of the gun. He was a lifeboat man, and to such as he salvage money is important. Provided that no lives are lost, a wreck in Scilly is regarded with equanimity. It is the last slight trace of that wrecking instinct for which Cornwall had an ill-fame in old days, when it is said that women joined in the fell work, and children yelled a song of doom and despair to the dying marines. But that is going far back indeed. The "oldest inhabitant" can only remember a time when the rescuers levied a rough aid toll upon the sea's harvest of wrecks. In many of the cottages are still to be found curious vessels of glass and earthenware, strange and beautiful pieces of furniture, rare prints, and articles of vertu gathered from the sea by their

forefathers, and gathered, it is plain, from many climes. As one watches the great liners passing from the Channel to the Atlantic, and *vice versa*, it is easy to guess the character of the merchandise that used to be lost. Needless to say, all that belongs to the dead past. The present islanders are a particularly kindly and honest people, and the coastguards police the shores carefully. Wrecking and smuggling came to an end about the same time. Without these there are tales enough of the cruel and hungry sea. One has but to read the memorials in the churchyard to the numbers "drowned at sea" to realise this, and those who have manned the lifeboat tell many thrilling and awful tales of what happens when a ship comes to grief in a winter storm. Although the Scillies have been known to civilisation since the days of the Phœnicians, there is little on them to recall the past. Here and there a gigantic barrow carries to us a dim uncertain message from antiquity. At Tresco, surrounded by the garden of tropical plants, gathered from distant parts of the world by Mr. Dorrien-Smith, a few arches remain to remind us that here the mediæval monk sang his vesper and his evening hymn, but there is little else that has come down from hoar antiquity. Even the land is not held by so old a principle as, for example, the Udal tenure, remains of which can still be found in Orkney and Shetland. It is held from the Duchy of Cornwall on a lease by a land proprietor—at the time of writing Mr. Dorrien-Smith. The land is divided into tiny fields and tinier gardens, separated either by dry stone walls or evergreen and ever-flowering hedges of veronica and euonymus. And the style of cultivation reminds us closely of that prevailing in the Channel Islands. Cows, donkeys, and horses are systematically tethered when grazing, and it is customary to hobble even the sheep when they pasture on the occasional tracts of meadow that break the monotony of the small enclosures. Excellent milk is produced, and butter is made according to the old Cornish fashion, that is to say, cream is put into a vessel and stirred by hand till the butter comes. It is of tolerable quality, but salt is too freely used. The sowing of early potatoes and the production of spring flowers are the main industries, though fishing is a subsidiary one. Yet fishing has never been conducted on a very large scale, frequent as have been the attempts to create a great industry. The harvest of the sea is collected by trawlers from a distance, though there is a considerable catch of lobsters, crabs, and crayfish. Mackerel, pollack, wrass, pilchard, and other species abound in the sea, and for those who take the trouble to catch them an inexhaustible market is offered in France and other parts of the Continent. London is too distant and is glutted. A Scilly Island fisherman gets nearly twice as much for a lobster as does a fisherman on the North-East Coast. The moral for the producer is, for the moment at all events, to avoid London, the dumping ground for all the surplus food of the rest of the world.

Some alarm was felt in the early part of the present year because of a partial failure in the flower trade. This is no longer what it used to be, and complaints are rife that, after the expenses of carriage and sale are deducted, the prices are now so low as to leave very little for the grower. It seems, however, to a casual eye that the islands have very great resources which, so far, are undeveloped. No portion of the British Islands is blessed with a more equable climate. The heats of summer are ameliorated by the cool sea winds endlessly blowing, and neither bad frosts nor heavy snows are ever experienced. In a word, the climate is one of the best in the world for breeding poultry. No difficulty whatever is experienced in getting eggs hatched all the year round, and, at any rate, the incubator is independent of times and seasons. Hens of a mongrel breed are already kept in considerable numbers, so that there is no practical obstacle. Obviously, then, a prosperous future is before the Scillonian who sees that the early spring chicken is bound to be a more paying commodity than the earliest daffodil. No special outlay would be

necessary. The birds could be kept and fed in the houses allotted to them now; all that is necessary is to fix on a cross that suits the climate—the favourite Dorking and Cornish Game would probably do as well as any other—and adopt the most modern methods of rearing. Perhaps the most essential preliminary would be to enter into correspondence with some of the leading poulterers in London, so as to ascertain exactly at what time spring chickens command the best market, and also what are the requirements in regard to weight and so forth. It is of little use to attempt to make money out of poultry on the ordinary slipshod lines, but if a really first-class bird could be got ready for the spring market a lucrative price would be received for him.

The new industry would not greatly interfere with the old. True, the flower-grower has work for his hands all the year round, but his busiest time is in spring, when the flowers are cut, packed in boxes, and despatched to London. At other seasons seaweed is collected for manure. Bulbs are thinned, for they grow so freely that they threaten to choke one another, and car-loads of superfluous roots are carried to the sea and washed away by the tide. Boxes have to be made, and we like the plan of having them constructed on the premises. Yet in the autumn there is a fair amount of idle time, and it is then that the chickens would require most attention. It would render the industry still more secure if a central fattening establishment were started, say, at St. Mary's. To this the small rearers could send their produce.

THE RAINBOW TROUT OF NEW ZEALAND.

IN the North Island of New Zealand, Rotorua Lake to-day affords an example of successful transportation of trout ova from one side of the globe to the other, under conditions of temperature ranging from frigid to tropical, so wonderful as to cause well-merited apprehension as to how it will all end; for in this particular water the rainbow has of late years so increased in numbers as to necessitate some method for its reduction, lest Nature should by undesirable methods proclaim her abhorrence of excessive preponderance of individual life. In short, the food supply is no longer equal to the demand, and, correspondingly, the fish leak condition. Nevertheless, the sport obtainable here is of so extraordinary a character as to warrant the wholesale casting aside of sickly degenerates without materially affecting the grand total of the day's bag.

An unusual consolation is here afforded the fly-fisher who despises as degrading the use of any form of bait, either real or artificial; he soon learns that with the fly alone he can assure a three times greater catch, at least in numbers if not in weight, as can be obtained by trolling, by which means an occasional 20-pounder may be done to death. Although the fly rarely takes a fish of over 15 lb., there is every probability of some day deceiving one of 5 lb. greater weight and experience.

Thoroughly to enjoy fishing on Rotorua Lake a man must be prepared to undertake the enjoyment of camping out, either in his own tents or by hiring a complete outfit, including a cook. There is, however, one fixed camp kept by a Mrs. Paul, which can be highly recommended, where from one to four persons can be well catered for at a charge of 10s. per head per day inclusive. It is prettily situated at Awahou, on probably the most sporting portion of the lake, upon the bank of an excellent river of the same name. To obtain the best possible sport a naphtha launch and small boat, the usual charge for which varies from £20 to £25 a month, are desirable.

Of the few really suitable camping-grounds Hamurana as may be seen from the picture, is a very beautiful spot, with an excellent pitch on a charming little river of emerald-tinted



J. Turner-Turner.

A DAY'S CATCH.

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A TEN-POUNDER.

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transparent water flowing over a snow-white bed, well stocked with trout up to rolb., and as difficult to fish as the majority of such rivers. Although fish are here plentiful enough, four or five brace will be as many as the angler will find himself able to capture in the course of the day—that is, by fair fishing, either with dry or sunken fly. There is always sport to be obtained in these rivers, even upon days when not a fish can be taken in the lake. Usually off Hamurana is considered one of the favourite localities in the lake, but during the season of 1906 it has proved a complete failure. In fact, rainbow trout are erratic fish, here to-day, gone to-morrow—often present for an hour and invisible for the remainder of the day. Sport depends almost entirely upon the wind, so that only one accustomed to the lake can decide with any degree of certainty in which direction to expect sport under special conditions; hence the desirability of a launch. Sometimes, with a strong wind in the right quarter for the place selected, with little white-topped breakers dashing on to a sand bar, at every cast eager trout, mostly 4-pounders, will dash at the fly until thirty have been creeled between two rods within the hour, and a record anticipated; then, suddenly, the wind will shift, resulting in the capture of not another fish throughout the remainder of the day. Thus is a gigantic slaughter time after time providentially deferred. Sometimes it so happens that favourable conditions continue sufficiently long to enable a couple of rods to get together sixty fish from 3lb. to 4lb. each; but such a catch is rare, and when taken in these quantities they run small, the 12-pounders being usually among the five-brace bags, which is, after all, a creditable enough catch for a rod in one day's fishing. No scruples of wanton destruction need harrow the fisherman's feelings here, for the more fish he can remove the better; neither are they wasted, being gratefully accepted in the hospitals of Rotorua and Auckland. They are also a boon to the hotel-keepers, who—although trout are so abundant all over the island—are unable to procure them, for by a wise administration it is rendered illegal to sell or buy, while any surplus fish are eagerly acquired for salting or drying by the natives, who largely subsist upon the products of the lake.

Although there is no insurmountable difficulty in transportation to Auckland, fishermen are often much troubled to preserve their fish from the onslaught of blow-flies, very large and very abundant along the shore. An especially objectionable variety with brown hair has the power of producing living maggots instead of the customary eggs; to obviate the inevitable result of such a deposit the best means is immediately upon landing a

fish to bury it in the sand, and leave it there until fishing is over, when, should it have to be carried far, it should be cleaned and packed off to Rotorua, where it can be placed on ice pending the departure of the train for Auckland, and thus ensure its arrival in sound condition. Should any clothing be left upon the margin of the lake, it is well carefully to cover it up, or the flies, deprived of their natural nesting-places, will encase all exposed articles with eggs, which in thick wool are very difficult of extraction.

Prospective visitors to New Zealand must avoid confusing the South with the North Island. In the former, so far as could be gathered apart from personal experiment, a fishing expedition would be doomed to disappointment. Undoubtedly, huge brown trout are plentiful there, but they can be taken only with bait at night-time, and are much fished for. To those who have once experienced it, night-fishing, although admittedly replete with excitement and adventure, scarcely appeals as a factor for fine tackle and artistic manipulation, while such sport as may be indulged in by daylight only appears to result in the capture of sprat-like individuals.

The principal drawback to New Zealand fishing is the necessity for wearing waders of the highest dimensions, both in lake and river, although it is often possible to fish here and there in the latter without them, always, however, at the risk of disappearing in some hole up to the elbows; and how deep these holes extend, whether into boiling or iced water, is a problem only solved by experiment. A man may pride himself upon a sufficiently tough constitution to dispense with such inconvenient and comfortless articles, but the first attempt to do so satisfies him of his inability to withstand the icy chill from numerous springs encountered from beneath, which numb into powerlessness his lower extremities. It would be well to provide one's self with two pairs of waders, for when in constant wear there is scarcely sufficient opportunity for satisfactory drying between times of use; they would also be best taken out from England, not being always procurable in New Zealand, or of the best quality. It would be a great saving of time, labour, and friction could they be made with boots attached, all in one piece; neither does any apparent objection exist to such a plan, which would, undoubtedly, save the rapid destruction of the rubber feet, so troublesome on account of the accumulation of coarse sand and grit which finds a ready way into the loose boots, chafing at every tread, so that within a month at the longest patching becomes a necessity.

Connecting Rotorua with Rotoiti Lake is a channel of swift water nearly two miles in length, well worthy of attention,



J. Turner-Turner.

DISASTER.

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through which quantities of often heavy fish pass from one lake to the other; here the banks have been cleared, so that the only obstructions lay plentifully beneath the water. Either dry or sunken fly can be used, often with great results, and save for the constant passage of launches, which do not disturb the fish nearly so much as would be supposed, it proves a most enjoyable stretch of river, very welcome upon calm and consequently unfishable days elsewhere. It seems strange that in water so teeming with hungry fish as Rotorua Lake, absolutely blank days should be possible, yet such is frequently the case, both with fly and bait. To start fishing in a calm is but to court disappointment, as is also early or late fishing with the fly; but with spoon or minnow the result is exactly the reverse, the heaviest bags falling to the daybreak and evening enthusiasts.

Although rainbows love to lie in so torpid a condition around cold springs as to permit themselves to be actually kicked into action, and will not at such times look at a fly, yet they take readily in warm, evil-smelling places, whose boiling sulphurous water bubbles up from below; but for choice a cool medium affords the best prospect of sport. Towards the end of the season bags greatly increase, as the fish congregate at the mouths of the



J. Turner-Turner.

A MAORI GIRL.

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various rivers preparatory to ascending for spawning. This is, however, not infallible, for it seems that every rule is only made to be broken by rainbows, whose behaviour from first to last is, at any rate to a novice, almost incomprehensible. One day they will take only close to the surface, the next nothing but a skilfully sunken fly almost upon the bottom will attract them. Often after flogging for an hour without a single pull the disgusted fisher shoulders his rod, permitting the fly to trail behind as he wearily forges ahead to some adjacent spot, when ere he has taken two steps a violent tug nearly pulls the rod over his back, and a good fish is lost for want of a tight line. This occurs so frequently that there is obviously some reason for it, the natural conclusion being that the fly has greater attraction when slowly crawling actually upon the bottom than when worked in the orthodox fashion; hence it becomes clear that he who succeeds in working his fly deepest will score the most fish upon such deep feeding days, and in this mode of fishing rests almost the only opportunity of displaying unusual skill in lake-fishing here. Those who find an occasion for New Zealand fishing should, as a unique experience, avail themselves of it, nor will they ever regret having done so. But it remains a matter of individual taste whether or no they desire to repeat the experiment later on.

J. TURNER-TURNER.

JESS DOMENY ON STRIKE.

BY M. E. FRANCIS.

THE hay in Farmer Old's biggest field had been duly mown and tossed, and his whole staff were now employed in carrying it. But the day was intensely hot, with a brooding sultriness which seemed to betoken a coming storm. Dust lay thick upon the hedges, and the ground was iron hard; rain was badly needed, no doubt, but Farmer Old devoutly hoped it would hold off just a little longer until the crop was saved. He was a wonderfully energetic man was Farmer Old, and spared himself as little as those who worked under him. All the long, glowing hours of that languorous day he had toiled as manfully as any of his labourers; but now at length he had left them to their own devices for a short time, and the men breathed more freely in consequence. The rattle of the hay-rake ceased as the driver, having reached the corner of the field, paused to wipe his brow before turning the horses. A little knot of men, deputed by the farmer to ensure against any possible waste by following in its wake with the humble wooden implements in vogue before its invention, insensibly drew nearer together. One of their number expressed the natural longing for a drop of beer, and another incautiously provoked envious feelings by announcing that at Farmer Inkpen's the men had as much beer allowed them as they could drink at busy times.

"He do send it out to 'em reg'lar," said Martin Fry. "E-es, my brother James, what works for Farmer Inkpen, do say that they do be carr'in' the jugs back'ards and forrards fro' the house to the field so reg'lar as if 'twas but the family themselves what was workin'. There, it do make I dry wi' naught but thinkin' on it."

Jess Domeny looked up from the long roller of hay which he had just raked together, and surveyed his comrade vengefully.

"An' it mid well make ye feel dry, Martin!" he cried, emphatically. "It mid well make ye feel dry. Sich a day as this be, an' us a-workin' so many hours at a stretch."

Jim Stuckey, perched aloft on the seat of the hay-rake, drew the back of his hand across his lips, and remarked that it was the drouthiest weather he'd a-knowned since he was a lad, an' he'd see'd a good few hot summers too.

"I wish," resumed Martin, voicing the sentiments of the party, "our Measter was so thoughtful for his fellow-creeturs as Farmer Inkpen do be, accordin' to my brother James, but I truly believe a man's tongue mid drop out of 's head wi' drith afore he'd take a bit o' notice."

"Measter b'ain't mich of a drinker hisself," hazarded a lover of fair play, "or else I d' 'low he'd have a bit more feelin' for sich as we together."

"He did ought to ha' feelin'," cried Jess, vehemently. "A man same as Measter what be makin' sich a sight o' money, takin' prizes for carn, an' layin' by the dibs so fast he can scarce count 'em, did ought to have a bit o' mercy on them what do have to earn their bread by the sweat o' their brow."

"Measter do sweat, too," put in the impartial bystander, mildly. "He do sweat like anythin', Jess. I've a-see'd the big draps a-standin' on 's face."

"What I d' say is," continued Jess, after pausing to glare at the last speaker, "a man i' Measter's place, what be set up over his feller-men by the hand o' Providence, did ought to act providential-like. When the weather be that mortal hot a man gets thirsty sittin' in a chair, them that's set over him did ought to see as he had a drap or two to m'isten his tongue wi'."

There was a murmur of approval, and then the men prepared to continue their labours. But Martin stayed them by an admonitory gesture.

"If ye wasn't all sich a poor-spirited lot we wouldn't be put upon the way we be now," he remarked. "There's no way o' bringin' Measters to reason if men won't stick up for theirselves."

"Stick up for theirselves?" echoed Jim, with a startled look.

Jess transferred his wooden rake from his right hand to his left, and fumbling in the pocket of his corduroys produced a small green slab of newspaper.

"Did ye chance to notice what the cab-drivers in London done when they wanted their wages rose?" he asked. "They went on strike—there, ye can read it for yourselves."

Martin Fry stretched out his hand for the paper, and slowly spelt out the paragraph designated by Jess's horny finger; then he returned the grimy sheet to its owner with a shake of the head and a pursed lip.

"I was readin' a while back," continued Jess, without heeding these signs of disapproval, "how some colliery chaps what was wantin' shorter hours got their way—they did go on strike too. The Measters had to give in. Well, why shouldn't us go on strike for a drap o' beer at haymakin' time?"

The others looked at each other and then at Jess, who, with his battered chip hat pushed back upon his stubbly grizzled head, returned their gaze defiantly.

"I'd start it soon enough," he observed, "if I could get the rest o' ye to back me up, but ye haven't got no more spirit nor a pack o' mice."

At this moment the farmer's stentorian voice hailed them from the gate.

"Now then, now then, what be doin' over there?"

The gate creaked violently on its hinges, and swung to with a re-echoing bang behind the Master, whose long legs carried him towards the idlers at a prodigious pace, while, as he strode along he kept up a flow of sarcastic admonition:

"I d' 'low you folks do seem to think 'tis safe to let the grass grow under your feet these times, but I tell ye I do want to save this crop afore thinkin' about another. . . . Jim Stuckey, I hope ye be restin' yerself so well as the harses. Well, Jess, ye be a-waitin' for the rain to fall, I d' 'low!"

He had reached the group by this time. Jim was already almost out of earshot, the rattle of his machine drowning the last words. But Jess heard them; his comrades had already resumed their labours, but he remained standing still, leaning upon his rake and surveying his master with a lowering gaze.

"Don't hurry yerself, Jess," observed Farmer Old with a sneer.

He was a tall man, but spare of figure, with long wiry limbs and a face burnt mahogany colour and fringed by a grey beard; his small black eyes were as expressionless as sloes, but there were certain humorous lines about his mouth.

"Talkin' o' rain," observed Jess, sternly, "a man mid very well wish for it these times; a drap or two mid m'isten his tongue."

Mr. Old was so staggered by this remark, which, under the actual conditions, appeared to him almost blasphemous, that he found himself for the moment unable to reply.

"Some folks," resumed Jess, "as we was a-sayin' jist now—"

"Sp'ake for yerself," growled Martin, uneasy under the gaze of his Master's sloe black eyes.

"Well, an' I will sp'ake for myself, an' I'll sp'ake out," cried Jess with spirit. "I say—Measter, a man wi' a heart in his body 'ud take a bit o' thought for his men, an' 'ud not let 'em go wantin' a drap o' beer on sich a day as this."

"A drap o' beer!" ejaculated Old with a relieved laugh. "That's what be the matter, be it? I d' 'low, Jess, ye've a had a drap too much a-ready."

"I'll take my oath I haven't!" exclaimed Jess, much incensed at this undeserved accusation; indeed, the mere suggestion appeared to intensify the longing which he was supposed to have partially gratified. "I haven't a-had a glass to-day, Measter, nor likely to, seein' it's Friday, an' my wold 'ooman she do never allow I a penny at the back end o' the week."

"'Tis because you do get through your 'lowance at the beginning," returned the farmer, preparing to move on.

"Nay now, bide a bit, sir; I'm dalled if I don't sp'ake out as I said I would! There's Measter Inkpen what haven't a-got so big a farm as you've a-got, an' what b'ain't a-layin' by so much money—well, when his men be a-workin' so hard as what we be a-doin' to-day, he do send 'em out some beer to the field. Martin Fry was a-tellin' us about it—wasn't ye, Martin?"

"Well," said Martin, uneasily, "I did hear some sich talk fro' my brother James what works up to Inkpen's, and I mid ha' mentioned it, but I don't want no argyment about it."

"No need to have no argyments," returned the farmer, blandly. "Measter Inkpen have a-got his notions, an' I've a-got mine. An' I'll tell ye straight out, my bwoys, I've got no notions o' sendin' out beer to folks what be a-earnin' good wage, an' can buy for theirselves so much as be good for 'em. A man's better wi'out it, to my mind."

"If that be your notion, Measter, I'm sorry for ye," shouted Jess, whom the last remark had enraged beyond bounds of caution. "There, 'tis treatin' your human fellow-creeturs worse nor the beasts of the field. Look at them cows yonder—ye'd never think o' lettin' them go dry. Wasn't we standin' up to our knees in muck last spring, a-cleanin' the pond for 'em? There's one a-standin' in it now a-drinkin', an' a-coolin' his lags. I d' 'low 'tis enough to make a body envy the dumb brutes."

Farmer Old fixed him with his expressionless gaze.

"Well, Jess," he returned, with a provoking mildness which added fuel to Jess's wrath; "I b'ain't a onreasonable man, I hope. I have no objection at all to your goin' an' standin' in the pond to cool your legs and refresh yerself. E-es, I'll allow ye five minutes."

The men's laughter rang out loudly at this sally; the distant rattle of the hay-rake ceased for a moment as Stuckey drew rein,

and turned in his seat in the hope of ascertaining the nature of the joke. But Jess threw his rake from him, and turned upon his Master with anger, tempered by dignity.

"Then I'll tell ye what it is, sir," he cried. "Flesh and blood can't bear it no longer. I be a-goin' on strike."

Mr. Old surveyed him for a moment, then he glanced at Jess's fellow-workers, just the fraction of a gleam being perceptible in his inscrutable eyes. But Martin and his companions raked away as if their lives depended on the speed with which they accomplished their task.

"Oh, ye be goin' on strike, be ye?" he observed. "Goin' to strike all by yerself seemingly."

Again he glanced at the gang of rakers, whose efforts became, if possible, more strenuous than before, and who appeared quite unconscious of what was going on; then he set his legs a little more wide apart and whistled.

"Ye want a rise of wages, I suppose?" he continued, calmly.

Jess considered, and then threw out his hand impressively; there was a certain appearance of tension about the bent backs of the workers. It would be a queer thing if, after all, the Master were going to give in to Jess.

"No, Measter," said the latter with a virtuous air. "Ye rose me last year, an' I b'ain't the man to ax for more now; but a drap o' beer's another thing. I be goin' on strike, Measter Old, till you agree for to send us out a drap o' refreshment at such times as these."

"I'm glad ye didn't ax for more wage, Jess," returned Old, still mildly, "because ye wouldn't ha' got it. As for sendin' out refreshment, as I did tell ye jist now, I've got no notion o' doin' no sich thing."

"Well, Measter," responded Jess, "I'm sorry for to disapp'int ye, but I'll ha' to knock off work till ye give in."

"Jist oblige me by handin' me that there rake," said the farmer. "There's a couple o' teeth gone—I'll have to fine ye threepence for that. Ye shouldn't throw my property about that way. I can pay ye the rest o' your wage now if ye like. To-morrow comes off, o' course."

"Of course," echoed Jess, staring a little blankly, however. He had not expected that Mr. Old would accept his resignation with so much promptness and such evident placidity.

The farmer now produced a greasy leather purse and counted out the sum of twelve shillings and ninepence.

He doled out the last-named fraction in pennies, and as each chinked upon his palm, Jess's countenance fell more and more.

"I don't know but what I've let ye have a bit over," observed Mr. Old with a dubious look. "'Tis a bit ar'kard to make a calculation all in a minute like this. But there, you've worked for me nigh upon ten year now—I'll not be too close wi' ye."

Jess pocketed the coins and shambled away without speaking. After twenty paces or so, however, he turned. Nobody was looking after him; his late master was now plying his own discarded rake; his former comrades were working with the same fury of zeal which had seized them from the instant of Mr. Old's appearance. At the sight, Jess's long-gathering ire broke forth.

"So that's how ye do treat I!" he exclaimed. "Me, what's worked for 'ee ten year! You do pack me off wi'out a word. E-es, n'arn o' 'ee has so much as a word to throw at I what's done my best an' worked along o' ye these years and years."

Martin Fry glanced up with a stricken look, but apparently found nothing to say; somebody did murmur inarticulately that he was sure he wished Jess well, an' couldn't say no more nor that, but none of the others could be said to respond to his appeal. Farmer Old gazed at him with apparent amazement.

"Ye be a-plaisin' of yerself, b'ain't ye?" he enquired. "Ye be a-goin' on strike to please yerself?"

Jess rallied his pride.

"In course I be, but I be a-goin' on strike along o' bein' treated so bad."

"Well, ye'll not ha' no more bad treatment to complain on now," returned Old. "Ye be a-plaisin' o' yerself, as I do say. I do like folks to please theirselves."

Jess walked away.

Considering the strain of the recent struggle, the uncommon heat of the day, the abnormal thirst from which he was suffering, and the fact that he would shortly be called upon to face his wold 'ooman, it is not surprising that he should have turned into the Three Choughs before proceeding on his homeward way. At the last-named hostelry he recovered some portion of the valour which had possessed him in the field, and which had been damped by the attitude of the farmer and his men, and, indeed, felt himself to be a hero. Ten minutes' conversation with the Missus, however, sufficed to disabuse him of this idea, and he went to bed in a puzzled and chastened frame of mind. Mrs. Domeny had impounded the remainder of his already curtailed wage. She had also propounded certain questions which Jess found it difficult to answer, such as, Who did he

suppose would give him work now? What would become of her and the children? How were they to meet the rent if he were to be long out of work? Each query being coupled with the persistent refrain: Wasn't he ashamed of himself?

With the dawn, however, fresh courage came. He had done what was only right in the interests of himself and of his colleagues, and must surely triumph in the end.

The threatened thunder-storm had blown over, but, nevertheless, it was a busy and critical time for farmers. Mr. Old would, no doubt, be glad enough to come to terms now that he too had had a night to sleep on the matter. They would be cutting the Twenty Acres to-day—the grass was almost over-ripe, and there was Sunday coming—Mr. Old might possibly invite Jess to come back, and might even render the reconciliation more enduring by making the required concession.

"What's a drap o' beer to sich as he?" murmured Jess, as he hastily donned his garments; he himself knew how much it meant to him. If Farmer Old did not come round there would be no beer for Jess for a considerable time.

He arrived at the Twenty Acres a little before the usual time of starting work, but found to his surprise that the two mowing-machines had already begun operations. Farmer Old himself was driving the one which usually fell to Jess's share. Jess stood leaning across the gate with a pleasant smile on his face until the last-named machine drew near him.

"Mornin', sir," he remarked, hailing the farmer in a genial tone. "You do seem to be early at work."

"We be a bit shart-handed, ye see," responded Mr. Old, with a grin which displayed his remaining teeth.

This was the opportunity Jess had hoped for; he grinned back expectantly.

"It do seem a shame to see ye sittin' up there, Farmer. It must be a good few year since you drove a mower."

"E-es," agreed Mr. Old. "'Tis a good few years now. 'Tis a nice change."

He flicked at the off horse's ear as he spoke, and the machine went rattling up the field again.

Jess waited till it turned, and then marched round the gate with a determined air, taking off his coat as he advanced, and setting his hat firmly on his head.

"Come, sir," he cried, laying his hand on the reins. "This here job be altogether too much for ye. You get down, an' let me pop up in your place. I can't bide to see ye a-makin' a slave o' yoursel' same as that."

"Thank 'ee, Jess, thank 'ee," responded the farmer, clambering down with great alacrity. "E-es, I'll not deny I'm gettin' a bit stiff wi' this here job. I reckon it 'ud ha' tried me a bit."

"I can't forget as I did work for ye for ten year," observed Jess, eyeing him sharply; he felt it would be the proper thing now for the other to own he was in fault on the previous day. But Mr. Old appeared to have no such intention. He handed over the reins with a beaming face, and watched Jess take his vacated seat with evident satisfaction.

"I do call it real handsome of ye to lend a hand same as ye be a-doin'," he said. "Real handsome, but no one do know better nor you that these be busy times."

Jess's countenance assumed a dubious, not to say depressed, expression as he set the mowing-machine in motion; what did the Master mean? Surely he could not think Jess such a fool as to lend a hand out of mere neighbourliness? His doubts increased when at dinner-time the farmer renewed his expressions of gratitude, something very like a twinkle appearing the while in his habitually expressionless eyes.

"I'll not expect ye to come back this afternoon," he observed. "Ye'll have lots o' little jobs to do at home. Nay now, a favour's a favour, an' I'd never be one for to ax too much."

Jess stared hard, scratching his jaw, and the other resumed: "I've a-heerd o' folks goin' on strike before, but I will say I did never hear of a man what acted so good-natured. There, most strikers do look on the Masters as they've a-left as regular enemies. 'Tisn't many as 'ud offer to do a good turn on a busy day same as you be a-doin'."

"Your Missus did ought to allow ye a glass o' beer to-day," continued the farmer, handsomely. "I'm sure ye do deserve it."

"Well, I'm dalled," growled Jess—under his breath, however, for he had sufficient self-respect to accept the situation. He walked away with as jaunty an air as he could assume, and the farmer stood watching him for a moment or two, shaking with silent laughter.

Jess passed a very dismal Sunday. His friends looked at him askance; for his conduct had occasioned much talk, and he was regarded in that little community in the light of a dangerous firebrand. His Missus lost no opportunity of impressing upon him her views of his recent action; Farmer Old passed him with a smile which he could not but think savoured of malicious triumph; and Martin Fry, whom he chanced to encounter on his way from church, delivered it as his opinion that he had made a "sammy" of himself.

The very indignation provoked by this remark, which, as he thought, came ill from the man whose incautious speech had

first evoked in his hearers a sense of personal ill-usage, suggested to Jess a new plan of action. Why not offer his services to Mr. Inkpen, who would know so well how to reward them? He could not but feel gratified at the thought that it was in vaunting his generosity, and in endeavouring to force Old to follow his example, that Jess had lost his place.

He strolled round to Inkpen's premises at a convenient hour of the evening, when he would be likely to find the Master disengaged. Fortune seemed to favour him. Mr. Inkpen, very much at ease in snowy Sabbath shirt-sleeves, was leaning across his gate, smoking a ruminative pipe.

"Fine evenin', sir," began Jess.

The farmer nodded, a trifle sourly.

"Ye haven't a-got all your hay in yet, I see," proceeded Domeny.

Mr. Inkpen removed his pipe from his mouth.

"I'd like to know what business it be o' yours whether I've a-got it in or whether I haven't?" he returned, with what seemed to Jess uncalled-for asperity.

"No offence, sir, no offence," faltered the latter.

"You do seem to meddle a deal too much in my affairs," continued the farmer. "It don't matter to you, as I can see, whether I do give my men beer or whether I don't. You haven't got to drink it."

"No, sir, that's true. I only wish I had the chance," said Jess, with a sinking heart; it did not seem a promising opening of negotiations.

"Well, then, why must ye go bringin' up my name to Mr. Old, an' a-tryin' for to make trouble wi' his folks? Mr. Old an' me be good neighbours, an' don't wish to be nothin' else. I don't meddle wi' his business and he don't meddle wi' mine. 'Tis a pretty bit of impidence for the likes o' you to go a-puttin' your word in."

"'Twas a mistake," stammered Jess. "Measter Old he did take I up a bit too shart. I did but chance to mention to en how kind and good-natured you'd showed yourself. I did tell en he did ought to follow your example and send out a drap o' beer to the men at busy times, same as you do—"

"Who's been makin' a fool o' ye wi' such tales?" shouted Inkpen, thumping the gate with his fist. "I d' 'low he was as big a fool as yourself, whoever he mid be; I did gi' the men a drink *once* when they was workin' arter time—but as for makin' a reg'lar practice of it, I b'ain't no more of a sammy nor my neighbours. Well, I hear Old has gived ye marchin' orders, an' a good job too. It do sarve ye right."

"Plase ye, sir, Measter Old didn't notice me. I be on strike."

Inkpen glowered at him for a moment and then burst out laughing.

"On strike, be ye? Well, I hope ye'll like it! All I can say is any master 'ud be well shut on ye. I wouldn't have such a mischievous chap as you among my folk for a hundred pound."

"If that's what you think, sir, I wish ye good evening," said Domeny, endeavouring to summon up some semblance of dignity.

"'Tis what I think," retorted the other. "I think you be a fool—a mischievous fool, an' I'm sorry for your wife an' family."

Jess betook himself home again in a very low-spirited condition indeed. Would all the masters think the same—would everyone look on him as a mischievous fool, and if so what would become of the wold 'ooman and the children?

His presentiments were but too well justified. Nobody was anxious to employ a revolutionary, who might at any moment foster discontent and promote disorder among his peaceful fellow-workers, or harass his employer with unreasonable demands.

Two or three days passed by, and Jess began to feel seriously uneasy; the long hours of enforced idleness wearied him and weighed upon his spirits. It seemed so strange to feel that there was no need to get up early, and no work waiting for him to do. His Missus, indeed, provided him with a good many odd jobs which occupied him at first, but on one particular morning he found himself absolutely at a loss.

Mrs. Domeny was elbow deep in suds; the children had all gone to school; he had finished weeding the garden, and cleaning the hen-house, and chopping the sticks; positively nothing remained for him to do. There was no use proceeding towards the Three Choughs, for his pockets were empty, and the landlord had long ago refused to allow him credit. He sauntered down the little flagged path, and leaned over his own paintless garden gate. Old Bright, who was crippled with rheumatism, was leaning over his a little lower down the row; Mrs. Stuckey's two youngest children were making dust pies near their own gateway. Domeny's eyes wandered from one to the other; no one was at home at this busiest time of the busy day except the women at their wash-tubs, the old folks, and the babes; and here was he, Jess Domeny, standing idle.

The air was full of the scent of newly-cut hay; there was a ceaseless rumble of distant waggons bumping in and out

of the fields; he could even hear the clanking of harness and the distant voices of the men. Every hand was wanted on such a day as this, but Jess's hands hung limply over the gate.

By and by he passed through, and sauntered, in an apparently purposeless manner, up to Old's farm. It was a comfortable house, conspicuous at present for the bright yellow of its new thatch and the glowing masses of crimson phlox, now in flower. On his way thither he passed the field, where hay-making was still in full swing; Mr. Old himself was plying a rake. He looked up as Jess paused, uncertainly, on the other side of the hedge.

"Ye be hard at it still, I see, sir," hazarded Jess.

"E-es, hard at it," responded the farmer, cheerfully.

"'Tis to be 'oped as you won't upset yourself," said Jess, hesitatingly; he was anxious to ingratiate himself, but had no desire to bestow a further meed of service gratis.

"I d' 'low it do I good," returned Old. "There, a man do never know how much he can do till he tries. I 'stead o' findin' myself a man shart, I'm reg'lar vexed to think how long I've kept a man too many."

Jess echoed his laugh in a half-hearted way, and then, finding Mr. Old's jocular humour a trifle trying, strolled on towards the farmhouse proper. Here all was cheerful bustle. Johnny Old was hanging out a basketful of linen on the clothes-line, which reached from the corner of the house to the gnarled apple tree; Polly, who was not so strong as her sister, was sitting in the sunshine with a pile of garments in need of mending; young Bill Hopkins was staggering across the yard carrying a huge bucket of pig-wash. At the sight Jess's interest quickened, and, at the same time, he was conscious of a spasm of active jealousy. It had been his office to attend to the pigs, and he had ever taken pride and pleasure in every detail connected with his charges, from the moment when they first ran squeaking about the yard till they became bacon.

"Be the new litter come yet?" he enquired in as casual a tone as he could assume.

"Lard, yes! Never see'd a finer lot—eleven they be wi'out countin' the littlest what did die last night. But 'twarn't worth rearing anyway."

"I'd ha' reared it though," said Jess. "What be bringin' the sow?"

"Oh, he be gettin' on nicely. He'll do all right on the usual stuff."

"He did ought to have a meal drink," said Jess, firmly.

"Haw, haw! You be terr'ble free wi' your drinks!" said Bill, slyly.

Polly Old tittered at the sally, and Jenny, catching the sound of mirth, uplifted her shrill voice to enquire the cause. Bill repeated the joke with a guffaw so loud that it brought out Mrs. Old from the house, with soapy hands and an enquiring face. She, too, laughed on hearing of Bill's jest.

"Ah, ye may all laugh," cried Jess, passionately. "But it b'ain't no laughin' matter to I. Ye think ye may cheek me now, Bill Hopkins, because I be down in the world, but I tell 'ee, Mrs. Old, if I did sp'ake a word about the sow 'tis because I—I—well, there! I don't like to see the poor beast punished for want o' proper care."

Mrs. Old stopped laughing.

"Ye was always a careful man, an' very knowledgeable about pigs," she observed, thoughtfully.

Jess, encouraged by these words of commendation, proceeded to lay down certain rules of diet appropriate to lady pigs, and Mrs. Old listened in silence, nodding now and then.

At the conclusion of his harangue she ordered Bill sharply to go back for the barley-meal, and desired her daughters to give over gigglin' and glenin' and get on wi' their work; then, meditatively wiping her hands on her apron, she strolled towards Domy.

"'Tis a pity, Jess, ye don't have so much sense for yourself as ye do have for the dumb beasts. B'ain't ye tired o' bein' on strike?"

Jess looked round him cautiously, and then back at her shrewd, kindly face.

"Well, Mum," he said, with the faintest dawning of a sheepish grin upon his face, "I won't say but what—well, I don't know."

"I've been a-talkin' to your Missus," continued Mrs. Old.

"Oh, and have ye, Ma'am?" said Jess, thoughtfully.

"E-es," said Mrs. Old. "I d' 'low she's tired of it, poor soul, if you b'ain't."

"Well, Ma'am," said Jess, "it do seem as if I'd ha' done better to ha' left Measter alone."

"It do look like it," agreed Mrs. Old with twinkling eyes. She paused, polishing the top of the gate with a forefinger crinkled from its recent immersion in the suds. "Maybe if ye was to say summat o' the kind to he, he mid overlook it."

For a moment Jess's pride struggled with his secret longings; then the pride broke down.

"I wonder would ye sp'ake to en for me, Mum?" he hinted.

"No, no. Best say whatever ye do have to say yerself," returned Mrs. Old, hastily. "So like as not he'd tell me to mind my own business. He b'ain't one as likes a 'ooman's interference."

"Well," faltered Jess, after another interval of inward struggle, "I'll foller your advice, Mum."

"Mind," cried Mrs. Old, as he was turning away, "I don't say for certain as he'll take ye back. He was a-sayin' t'other day as he'd done the right thing to make an example o' ye."

Jess stared at her blankly and then went slowly back to the field, more deeply depressed than he had yet been since the fatal day when he had asserted himself. Mrs. Old's words were ominous indeed. Jess had desired to be a leader among his fellows, to be imitated and admired; not to be set up, as it were, in a kind of moral pillory. He stood long looking over the hedge at the labours of the farmer and his men. At last Mr. Old, attracted by his gaze, came towards him.

"Want to take a hand again, Jess?"

"Nay, sir—leastways—I can't afford to take a hand for nothin'." 'Tisn't in rayson. But—"

He broke off, quailing beneath the farmer's gaze, now mildly enquiring.

"The Missus—my wold 'ooman, be terr'ble upset," he went on, "and there's rent-day to think on, and—'tis a bad job for I to be out o' work jist now, Measter."

"'Tis a pity ye didn't think o' that afore," said Mr. Old. "I d' 'low ye'll be a bit wiser in your next place."

"I don't know when I'll have another place, sir," said Jess, babyish tears springing to his eyes. "There, I can't get nobody to take I on—'tis a terr'ble bad look-out for I."

"'Tis, 'tis indeed," agreed the other heartily.

"I were thinkin', Measter Old, maybe ye'd overlook the past, an' take I back. Ye wouldn't ha' no fault to find wi' I again. I'd serve ye so faithful as ever I did, an' I'd—I'd never say nothin', nor ax for nothin'."

He stopped with a kind of gasp. Mr. Old turned his rake upside down and thoughtfully investigated a splintered tooth.

"Well, 'tis this way, ye see," he said, after a moment's meditation. "I did say I were a-goin' to make an example o' you. I did say so to myself, an' I did say so to the men, an' I b'ain't a man what likes to go back on his word."

Jess looked at him piteously, his round, ruddy face almost convulsed with anxiety. Farmer Old, who was a good-natured man, could not withstand its pathetic appeal.

"Well, I'll tell ye what I'll do," he cried—"there's one way I mid take ye back wi'out breakin' my word. I said I'd make an example of 'ee, an' dalled if I don't do it! There, I'll take ye back at same wage as before if ye'll turn teetotal."

If Jess's expression had been pathetic before, it was downright tragic now; he stood silently, with goggling eyes and a dropping jaw.

"Ye see," resumed the farmer, confidentially, "'twas the beer—or the wish for it—what did bring all this trouble upon ye. If ye pledge yourself to drink no beer ye can't wish for it."

Jess, however, was dubious on this point.

"'Twill be sich a disgrace," he stammered, presently.

"Disgrace!" repeated the farmer. "Nothin' o' the kind! Ye'll be an example to the men, I tell 'ee—they'll be all a-lookin' up to 'ee, an' a-praisin' 'ee."

Jess's countenance cleared in some slight measure; he took the rake which his master proffered him in silence, and forthwith fell to work with great vigour and goodwill.

Jim Stuckey, jingling past with the hay-rake, halted beside him.

"Be 'ee come to help again?" he asked, with a grin.

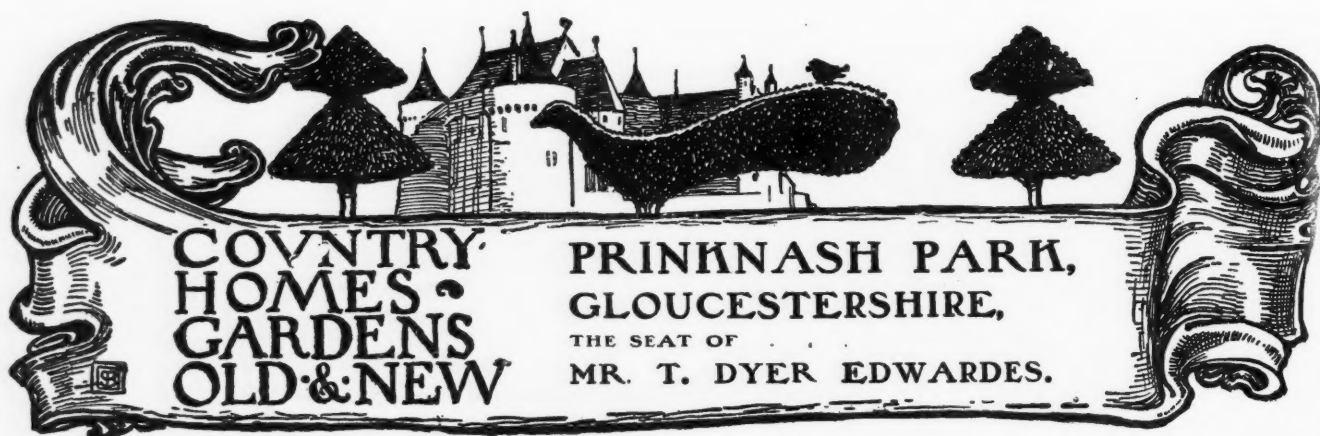
Domy looked back at him solemnly:

"I b'ain't on strike no more," he observed. "I've a-come to my senses again, an' I've a-come back to work. I be come," he added, straightening his back, and raising his voice for the benefit of the others, "I be come to set ye all an example. I be a-goin', Jim, for to give up drink altogether. I be a-goin' for to turn teetotal."

"Well, to be sure!" cried Jim, much impressed.

"E-es," resumed Jess, after a moment's pause, during which he had searched his memory for an appropriate text, which he now produced in a somewhat jumbled condition. "I have found out my sin an' I be a-goin' for to forsake it. I be a-goin' for to turn teetotal out an' out."

No one was more rejoiced to hear of this doughty resolution than Mrs. Domy, though from certain heated altercations which sometimes took place on Saturday nights between the couple, it might be inferred that in spite of his pledge the good fellow was still troubled by a certain rebellious hankering. It was even whispered that now and then—on market days, for instance—Jess's gait was wont to become unsteady and his speech a trifle thick, almost as of yore; but Farmer Old never appeared to notice these lapses from the path of rectitude, and Jess lost no measure of the respect with which he had inspired his fellow-labourers since he had first proposed to set them an example.



THE venerable gabled house of Prinknash—the name has been written otherwise as Prinknesse, Prinknesche, or even Brinknash—is seated on a slope of the Cotswolds looking out towards the Severn, in a region of ancient wood; indeed, as Horace Walpole said, when he visited it, in August, 1774, “on a glorious but impracticable hill, in the midst of a little forest of beech, and commanding Elysium.” The word is no exaggeration, for the outlook from the hill is full of historic interest, if we should read its moving chronicles, and great in its landscape beauty, with Gloucester itself in view, and prospects which fade into the enchantment of a sylvan distance. Here, in ancient days, the swine crunched the beech-mast in the broad wood known as Buckholt, which extended far on either side, and still the great columnar trees are the memorial of the days when the hunter’s horn resounded in the glades. The place was long a manor of the powerful abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester, through the grant of Osbern Giffard and others. “Prinknash,” we may read in the chronicle of Abbot Frocester, “extends as far as the beech, where the robber was hanged, between the King and Edgar de Kenemesbury and ourselves.” Britons and Romans have left evidences of their occupation hereabout, and the ancient Trackway which ran down from the camp on High Broadridge still forms the boundary of the park. The possessions of the abbey in this

neighbourhood were extended by subsequent grants, and the place was made extra parochial in 1397. It has now attained to the dignity of becoming a parish all to itself, containing some three or four houses only.

The surmise appears reasonable that a hunting-lodge was built at Prinknash soon after 1355, when a grant of free warren was made, and some parts of the existing house may even go back to that time, or to a date not much later. Tradition says that Abbot Parker, otherwise Malvern—1514-39, the last Abbot of Gloucester—first made use of Prinknash as a residence. Certainly the evidences of his work are upon it, notably the spandrel of a square-headed Tudor doorway with the initials W. M., a pastoral staff, a tassel, and fleur-de-lys; but there had been a house upon the site in earlier times, which had probably been occupied by the woodward, the holders of that office having been relations of successive Abbots of Gloucester. But the first distinct mention of Prinknash as a residence of the Abbot was in 1526, when one John Bayley was ordered to carry fuel for the Abbot’s fire.

The date of the building or enlargement of the house as it stands has been given as 1520-25, which accords with the style; and the south-western portion, the drawing-room, kitchen, and pantry belong to that period. Although modernised in some respects, and with sash windows in a part of the west front, the



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THE DRAWING-ROOM CHIMNEY-PIECE.

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style is generally that of the Late Perpendicular as applied to domestic architecture. The oriel in the library, with its pendants and fan tracery, is a fine example of Abbot Parker's work. It is also worthy of note that the centrepiece in the ceiling of the dining-hall has a Tudor rose, with the falcon and fetterlock, being the badge of the House of York; and it has been surmised that Elizabeth of York, Queen of Henry VII., lodged at Prinknash on her progress through Gloucestershire in 1502. There is exceedingly interesting glass of the period in the drawing-room, showing the arms of Henry VIII. and of the Abbot. The King almost certainly visited him at Prinknash in 1535; but his coming was the prelude of the Dissolution and spoliation that came about five years later. In the courtyard, sculptured in relief on the south-east wall, there is a figure-head of Henry, probably commemorative of his visit. The abbey and all its possessions passed into the King's hands, but Abbot Parker, though unable to avert the doom of his house, could never be brought to sign the fatal surrender. Horace Walpole, who often visited Prinknash, mentions the ancient chapel, "which is low and small, but antique, and with painted glass with angels in their coronation robes, wings, and crowns." He also mentions the communion plate, which,



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"C.L."

curiously enough, bore his family arms.

Prinknash was not immediately disposed of, but was let for a period to Sir Anthony Kingston, who, with his father, had been steward of the abbey, and shared in the spoliation. He was a notorious personage in his time, and his name is held in evil repute in Cornwall for the exceeding cruelty with which he suppressed the rebellion in 1549. Kingston was implicated in the plot to marry the Princess Elizabeth to the Earl of Devon, but cheated the scaffold by committing suicide. This, however, was long after he had had anything to do with Prinknash, which, in the year 1544, was granted to Edmund Brydges, son of Sir John Brydges, afterwards Lord Chandos of Sudeley, and to the affianced bride of the same Edmund, Dorothy, daughter of the Lord Bray. The grant was of the "capital messuage" or mansion, with the gardens, orchards, and pond within the park, as well as the park itself, and the buildings, mills, garden, fish-ponds, woods, and all rights and privileges, rendering a rent of 10s. yearly to the King. Doubtless the favour shown to Edmund Brydges and to Dorothy Bray was owing partly to the services and merits of their parents, for Sir John Brydges had greatly distinguished himself at the Battle of the Spurs and in the defence of Boulogne, and the



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THE WEST FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Brays had made themselves the trusty counsellors of the King. Edmund was made a knight banneret at Roxburgh in 1547, but before that time he had been Lieutenant of the Tower, and he succeeded his father as Lord Chandos of Sudeley in 1557, being made later on a Knight of the Garter.

Prinknash became a dower house, though it was occasionally used by the Lords Chandos when they visited Gloucester. There seems to have been some doubt as to the precise ownership of the place in the beginning of the seventeenth century; but the fifth Lord Chandos obtained the reversion from the King, and in 1628



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During his time a great deal was done to improve the house at Prinknash, and there remain shields of Henry VIII., Prince Edward, Seymour with many quarterings, Brydges, and Bray, which belong to the period. The glass may be ascribed to about the year 1546, when Edmund Brydges and his wife were living at Prinknash. Later on they made Sudeley their residence, and

sold the whole property to Sir John Bridgeman, Recorder of Gloucester, and his son George Bridgeman. The new owner was born in 1567, was a distinguished lawyer in his time, and married the sister and reputed heiress of Giles Daunt of Owlpen, near Dursley, in the same county. He was knighted in 1623, and as Chief Justice of Cheshire and Counsellor in Ordinary he took a

conspicuous part in the affairs of Wales and Gloucestershire, and being made Recorder of the City in 1628, he found Prinknash a convenient residence. He was a busy man, and was greatly concerned in the trial of riotous persons who objected to the sale and enclosure of parts of the Forest of Dean. He also held assizes on questions relating to ship money, and is reputed to have been so severe that one who had suffered by his sentence wrote an epitaph upon him :

Here lies Sir John Bridgeman, clad in his clay,
God said to the devil, "Sirrah, take him away."

It was a hard saying, and perhaps was not deserved by its subject. Sir John Bridgeman left his mark upon Prinknash, which he improved to his mind. The chapel was consecrated in his time, and he adorned the drawing-room with the beautiful and characteristic chimney-piece which is illustrated. It is a fine example of work in stone, except that the upper part is of carved wood. There are coupled Corinthian columns in two stages, and above the fireplace, enwreathed and adorned, upon three shields, are the many quarterings of Bridgeman, Woodward, Daunt, and Owlpen. The whole work is very characteristic of the period. Another notable mantel-piece is that in the library, which may, however, be somewhat later. The upper part of it has a curious sculptured panel, seeming to show Equity and Justice supporting the world, with an intervening figure holding a garment, which is apparently to be divided by the sword.

George Bridgeman succeeded his father in possession of Prinknash, and was apparently at one time closely identified with the Puritan party at Gloucester. The leaders there, at any rate, hoped to gain his assistance. It will be remembered that after the death of Hampden, when the Royalist cause was in the ascendant, Gloucester interrupted the communications between Bristol and the North, for which reason Charles laid siege to it, but the place held out stoutly, and he was obliged to raise the siege when Essex approached. The city authorities at Gloucester had issued a commission to George Bridgeman to prevent soldiers being levied for the King, to seize upon horses, arms, ammunition, plate, or provisions intended for the Royal service, to be ready to assist the Earl of Essex, and, finally, "to fight with, kill, and slay" all who should by force oppose him. But George Bridgeman thought discretion the better part of valour, and considered it prudent to retire and to separate himself from his friends. It was expected that the King would lodge at Prinknash, and everything was made ready, but he stayed himself at Matson House during the siege, though some of his chief officers were undoubtedly at Prinknash.

The estate remained in the Bridgeman family until 1770, when it was sold; and in 1776 it came into the possession of Mr. John Howell, who was succeeded as owner by his son, Mr. Thomas Bayley Howell, father of Mr. T. J. Howell, Judge Advocate of

the Forces and Judge of the Vice-Admiral's Court at Gibraltar. The latter gentleman did something to relieve the house of incongruities. He likewise improved the grounds and plantations, making the surroundings more attractive; but in 1847 he sold the estate to Mr. James Ackers, M.P. for Ludlow, who restored and beautified the chapel, and otherwise did much to the house, the work being carried on by his son and successor, Mr. Benjamin St. John Ackers. The estate again changed hands in 1887, when it was sold to the present owner, Mr. Dyer Edwardes, late of Waverley Court, Camberley, Surrey, and through his care the house has been invested with the finished charm which now distinguishes it. The ancient chapel has been enlarged by the addition of an apse, organ-chamber, and vestry, adapted from the design of a chantry in the Lady Chapel of Gloucester Cathedral; the statuary and panel-work are designed by Kemp. He has constructed a new drive to the house, and has beautified the grounds and improved the prospects.

IN THE GARDEN.

FLOWERS BY WATER EDGE AT GREAT TANGLEY.

THERE are few sweeter pictures than the gardens that surround the picturesque manor house of Great Tangley. Water, rock, and the many features of an English garden are to be seen in their richest development, such as the illustrations indicate. It is rather of the gardening by the moat that we would write, as this is a phase that should be more developed in the future. It has, of course, received a great impetus through the raising of the many beautiful Water-lilies or hybrid Nymphæas, which have given a fresh living beauty to the water surface; but the water margin and bank in the majority of English gardens receive scant attention. The margin of the brook teaches a wholesome lesson at all seasons. The Kingcups of the early year glisten in the moist soil, if they do not actually kiss the water itself, and then the soft lilac of Cuckoo-pint veils the upspringing grass, while through the summer there is the yellow of the Water-flag, and later a cloud of colour from Willow-herb and Loosestrife has settled by the stream or river bank. The garden should show some of this lush beauty, and of late years many beautiful plants have been introduced from abroad to vary the flowers that grow naturally in swampy places. Here and there the Gunnera or Rheum may be placed, the huge leaves appearing to advantage on a mount, bank, or river-side; and where the soil is moist by the pond or stream flowering rills of Japan Irises may be easily and quickly established. We wrote recently of the importance of water gardening, and therefore further reference to it is unnecessary. The illustrations are lessons in themselves.

PREPARING FOR SPRING.

It may appear strange to think of "preparing for spring" when the flowers of autumn still linger in the garden and the summer beds have not ceased to bloom; but as we have many times pointed out, gardening is a pastime or business which anticipates. It is useless to think of





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GREAT TANGLEY: THE TURN OF THE MOAT.

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THE CROSSING OF THE MOAT, GREAT TANGLEY.

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planting spring flowers when they should be in bloom, and it is for this reason we prepare months beforehand for the flood of colour and fragrance that is to follow. Wallflowers, *Silenes*, *Primroses*, *Polyanthuses*, *Arabis*, *Aubrietias*, bulbs of all kinds, *Doronicums*, *Daisies*, and other plants that flower during the early months of the year must, as soon as the beds have been cleared of their summer occupants, fill the vacant places. The soil should be first dug up deeply and exposed to air and sunshine to sweeten, and, if neces ary, be renewed, then other plants can be brought there from the seed-beds. Lift each one carefully with soil round the roots, and choose moist weather, so that the plants may recover as quickly as possible. A good use should be made of the single Wallflowers, the dark blood-red and the pure golden yellow, which make a brilliant show for many weeks, unless a very hard winter, with some damp days, kills this fragrant flower wholesale. We are never certain of the Wallflower until the early year, having experienced many disastrous failures, on a heavy soil in particular, to bring the really tender plants through the winter. It is, for this reason, wise to have a reserve stock, in a cold frame for example, to fill the blanks that usually occur before winter is over. Of recent years great use has been made of the bunch-flowered *Primrose* in the adornment of the spring garden, and we should not restrict the planting to the margin of beds, but fill whole beds with them, in order to derive as much enjoyment as possible from their pure and beautiful colourings and sweet fragrance. These *Primroses*, as we have already indicated in these notes, throw their flower-stems well above the vigorous foliage, and continue to bloom for many weeks. The yellow *Alyssum saxatile* and its sulphur-coloured variety are among the most sumptuous of spring flowers, creating billows of bloom which, against the warm purples of the *Aubrietia*, bring remarkable richness to the spring garden. We think no two brighter or more joyous flowers of the whole year can be chosen than the *Alyssum* and the *Aubrietia*, and strong plants are reasonable in price. The old crimson *Daisy* appears to have lost the affections of the English gardener, at least, we seem to see less of it than in the borders of our forbears. True, it has the tantalising habit of living a short life, but a stock is quickly renewed. A variety we can recommend is *Alice*; the flower is neat and crisp in form, if we may so use the term, and a pretty soft pink in colour. The work of "preparing for spring" admits of no delay, one great object being to establish the plants before winter has actually begun. A sharp frost will end the career of the *Dahlias*, *Cannas*, and other tender summer and autumn flowers that are still in bloom at the time of writing, and then the beds may be renewed with the *Primroses*, *Wallflowers*, or whatever fancy may suggest.

RANDOM NOTES.

Hedges of Escallonia.—The *Escallonia macrantha* is too tender for gardens in the Midlands and the North, but in Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall this beautiful shrub may be planted without fear of disaster, unless the winter is exceptionally severe. It was pleasant to see a full hedge of it enclosing a garden in South Devon, the rosy flowers gleaming among the deep green and abundant leafage. Where the climate suits it the growth is fairly dense, and it is a relief to look at such a hedge in its flowering-time, bearing in mind the wearisome repetition of green or golden privet, which seems to the minds of some the only shrub that is fitted for a dividing line in the English garden, even when it is placed in a sunny county in the South.

Making Defects Good.—An inspection should be made now of the garden to note down plants, trees, and shrubs that have failed in this summer

of brilliant sunshine and absence of rains. Probably the failures will have been seen before this, but one must order the things now to replace those that are dead or too weak to give strength within a reasonable period. On hot and dry soils many shrubs and trees planted last spring will have failed entirely. This may be attributed partly to the dry summer and partly, we fear, to wanton planting. It must be a vigorous tree that will survive the evils of cramped roots and an ill-prepared soil. The hole should be of sufficient depth and circumference to enable the roots to wander out unfettered for years, and they must be spread out as horizontally as possible, to give them, so to say, a free action. When a small orchard is to be planted remove all grass for a good space all round, and in an exposed position put a strong stake to each stem. Gardening is an expensive pastime when planting is carelessly done, for this simply means more failures than successes.

Opening of Mesembryanthemum Flowers.—Most of the species have the drawback of only opening in sunshine, but there are a few, like *M. lacerum*, which have not this failing; indeed, the different hours at which *Mesembryanthemums* open is one of their most interesting peculiarities. Some expand in the morning, some at noonday, others at four o'clock in the afternoon, and a few are night flowering; but if for any hygrometrical reason they refuse to open at the right hour, it is seldom that any amount of coaxing from later sunshine tempts them out of their fit of sulks for the day. Besides their bright flowers, moreover, *Mesembryanthemums* take some of the most curious forms of leafage. Best known of these, perhaps, is *M. tigrinum*, with stemless, boat-shaped leaves, furnished with nickel-like inter-lacing claws, between which the large solitary golden-hued flower pushes its way.

Mesembryanthemums from Cuttings.—But this is only one among many which will repay a little study. The plants are easily grown from cuttings, but from species such as *M. polyanthum* small tops may be pricked over the surface of a pot or pan in the early spring. Every bit will root, and the young plants, without any disturbance, will give a mass of colour in two or three months' time with less trouble than any plant we know. The larger-flowered sorts will require more patience; but the main points are to let the rooted cuttings have as much open air and sunshine as possible, to harden their tissues, and to give water with moderation and good judgment, as the softer and more succulent species are easily ruined by over-watering, and should be kept quite dry during the colder months.

Wall Gardening in Autumn.—The wall garden should be thoroughly overhauled, weeds removed, and fresh sowings made if it is evident that certain plants have succumbed. Spring is considered by some the only season for seed sowing, but as we know well in the case of many annual flowers, autumn is quite as appropriate a time as the early months of the year. We are planting *Wallflowers*, *Antirrhinums*, the *Alyssum*, *Aubrietia*, seedling *Pinks*, *Silenes*, *Draba*, the little *Violetta Pansies*, the wild *Pinks*, especially *Dianthus deltoides* (the Maiden Pink), which blooms from early summer until the autumn—we mean a scattered succession of flowers is maintained—*Sedums*, *Saxifragas*, the mossy *Arenaria balearica*, starred over in summer with white flowers, the *Alpine Wallflower* (*Cheiranthus alpinus*), and at the foot of the wall the wild species of *Primrose*, *Primula farinosa*, and where there is a damp spot the rosy *Himalayan Primrose* (*Primula rosea*) and that most luxuriant of wall plants the *Centranthus*. Of course, the *Carnation* will be there, and vigorous layers, not forgetting the wild *Carnation* (*Dianthus caryophyllus*), which hangs on many

a castle wall. It is wise, to achieve a distinct success with plants under these conditions, to build a wall especially for the purpose in which there is no mortar or cement. The plant must have space to send its roots into, and this is the more needful when the wall is exposed fully to the sun. A hot summer such as we have passed through has been sufficient to test the strength of almost every plant, unless it be the sun-loving *Mesem' ryanthemum*, which, except in the extreme South, will not survive the English winter. When planting seedlings, the roots must be thrust well into the joints with the soil, and a blunt stick is as useful as anything to accomplish this; while, when sowing seed, mix seed and soil together, giving a gentle syringing to settle everything in its place. Wall gardening is a delightful pastime, and the number of plants that will thrive in the crevices is astonishing—plants that one would think ill-placed in such positions. It is necessary to gain information about the various flowers to be used before planting them, as some rejoice in full sun and others in shade. The *Arenaria* is more mossy and healthy where it is screened from the midday sun. The beautiful *Ramondia pyrenaica* requires hardly any soil and a moist nook, and the *Alyssum* and *Aubrietia* are the better for some shade in the middle of the day.

Transplanting Carnation Layers.—There is no better time than the present to transplant Carnation layers or to plant Pink cuttings from the boxes in which they have been struck. The great object is to enable the layers to become established before winter frosts put an end to all growth; and therefore we recommend strongly layering early to accomplish this purpose. This is the more important where Carnations are to be planted on a large scale, such as filling beds with one variety or in association with Roses or Pansies. Where it is intended to purchase layers, we advise postponing this until the spring in heavy soils.

In the time of Lilies.—The Tiger Lily flower is dying, but sufficient still remain to give brilliant colouring to the garden. Much fuss has been made about the Lily disease, and no doubt in certain places the plants have been afflicted sadly, but *Lilium tigrinum* and *L. speciosum* have flowered gloriously with the writer this autumn, from bulbs planted late in spring. Unfortunately the Madonna Lily was almost a total failure, due, there is no doubt whatever, to late spring frosts. We attribute the disease entirely to this, as before the visitation, the stems and foliage were strong and healthy. It was noticeable that in the garden where the groups were in a measure protected, there was no disease.

THE RUFF IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

THE account of the breeding of the ruff in England, as described by Montagu, has been so frequently quoted as to have become familiar to the majority of ornithologists, though at the present day the bird is not included among the nesting species of this country. It is, therefore, with feelings of great satisfaction I am enabled to announce the fact that, for three successive seasons, a pair, at least, of these interesting and peculiar birds have successfully nested and brought off young within a very short distance of this corner of Cleveland. The first intimation I received of their presence in the neighbourhood was late in June, 1901, when my friend Mr. C. Milburn informed me that a ruff had been seen several times by his friend C. and himself on the edge of the marshes. A diligent search for the nest was, unfortunately, not attended with success, and, in the light of subsequent experience, it appears to be probable that the reeve would by that time have hatched off her eggs and taken her brood away. The ruff disappeared about the end of July.

In the following season an anxious watch was kept for the appearance of the visitors, and on May 10th notice was forwarded to me that the ruff and two reeves had arrived on the scene. The following observations, as noted in my journal, while the events were fresh in my memory, are given in diary form, and may prove interesting, being the impressions of what occurred as recorded on the spot:

May 15th.—Went with M. to the marshes, where we met C. The ruff had been observed "courting." C. had found the nest of No. 1 reeve (as we termed it), about the centre of the marsh, containing four eggs of a dark green ground colour, blotched and streaked with black; a lovely clutch. On our proceeding to the place the reeve ran off the eggs, which were quite warm. The nest was situated in a tussock of grass, not unlike the position chosen by a redshank, but the cup-shaped depression was deeper and rather greater in diameter than that usually made by the latter species.

May 17th.—Visited the marsh again, and, on my approaching the nest, the ruff appeared on a little hillock, where I watched him through a pair of binoculars for some minutes. He had a yellowish frill with dark edges, and black or purplish ear-tufts; he ran away for a few yards, then hid in the grass, and after a short interval, reappeared in another place, repeating this performance several times. I walked to the nest and flushed the female at about 6ft. distance; she tumbled headlong on the ground, and shuffled along on her breast as though severely wounded and in great distress, her feathers all dishevelled and wings drooping, a truly pitiable object; after dragging herself in this fashion for a few yards, she lay perfectly still, apparently simulating death; next she quietly crept away round a tuft of grass, and slyly peeped back to see what had become of the intruder

on her peace (I was prone on the ground, watching her through the glasses); she then lay still again for a little time, and finally, no doubt thinking all was right, stole off among some long grass and tussocks, where she disappeared. The ruff now made his appearance on a slight elevation, whence he flew up and around where I was concealed, as though he wanted to assure himself that no harm was being done to the treasures hidden near. He came directly towards the nest, and alighted close by, put back his ruff, and, after looking round for a few moments, rose and flew off again. I then, after examining the eggs, that were hot and near hatching, walked away out of sight of the nest and awaited developments. Once or twice I saw the ruff's head pop up among the grass, then disappear, and shortly afterwards reappear at another spot. After waiting half an hour I flushed the reeve again (the ruff was still hovering about). She repeated her former tactics, crept off crouching close to the ground till she was some 20yds. distant, and then walked away, seemingly unconcerned, in the bunches of long, coarse herbage. I watched her dodging in and out among this for a little while, till she finally disappeared. The ruff, when courting, lowered his wings like a blackcock, and strutted round the females, now and then rising and flying in a circle. He spread his ruff, and repeated these antics for fully twenty minutes. No. 2 reeve's nest is as yet undiscovered.

May 20th.—Went to the marshes with M. We saw the ruff near the nest, where the eggs were partly hatched; but some unfortunate accident had befallen them, as they were broken, the chicks dead, and the nest deserted. The ruff rose,

and in flying away hovered suspiciously over a certain patch of grass, whence one of the reeves flew up, and on going to the spot M. found the second reeve's nest with three eggs, similar to those first described in ground colour, though not so heavily marked, and of rather smaller dimensions. We saw both the reeves, and No. 2 flew over our heads, calling out in a low tone, not unlike a godwit's, but more feeble. While we were watching the birds, some cattle that were pastured on the marshes approached the place, and, one of them coming in the direction of the nest, alarmed its owner, which flew at the beast's head in an



T. H. Nelson.

REEVE'S NEST.

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excited manner that had the effect of turning it, otherwise the eggs would probably have been trodden upon.

May 29th.—On the marshes. I saw all three birds. No. 1 reeve was evidently nesting again; she flew round me for a long time, then settled on a bare patch of ground, and fell on her breast as though wounded, endeavouring to lure me from the locality. M. joined me about 6 p.m., and we watched the ruff and one reeve at quite close quarters. The ruff stood motionless, looking at the reeve, which continually ran in and out of the grass. No. 1 reeve had, doubtless, made another nest, and

No. 2 was about to build again. We kept them under observation until about eight o'clock, when they departed to a swampy part of the ground to feed.

June 10th.—I had been from home for ten days, and was unable to visit the marshes until this date. C. had meanwhile found No. 2 female's second nest near the place where the first had been built, but, owing to the marsh being flooded by heavy rains, it was deserted. I photographed the nest and eggs, which C. then took.

June 21st.—M., C., and I were on the marshes. I discovered the third nest of No. 2 reeve, quite close to the same locality as the others. After photographing the eggs, I waited till the owner returned. This bird eventually hatched the eggs, but the second nest of No. 1 reeve was not located, although it is certain she got her young away, as one was caught by M., who liberated it again. Another very young bird was picked up, having been injured by cattle, and a third was procured when the shooting season commenced. Until the eggs were hatched, the male was always attentive to both sitting birds; afterwards he seemed to

desert them entirely, and was last seen on July 16th, when both reeves had their offspring within a week of being able to fly.

An interesting scene occurred one day on the occasion of the ruff attacking a redshank that showed great solicitude about its nest and young in the vicinity of the reeves' nests; lowering its head and extending the ruff, with its bill pointed like a battering-ram, or a spike on a shield, it furiously rushed at the redshank, which nimbly sprang into the air and alighted a yard or two further away. The ruff continued its attacks most energetically, until the redshank was defeated and took its departure.

In the year 1903 the ruff and one female arrived in May, but, no doubt, having profited by their experiences of the previous season, selected a different part of the marshes for their nest, and, despite the united efforts of my friends and myself to discover its whereabouts, we were obliged to confess ourselves outwitted. In 1904 no sign of either of the birds was seen, nor have they been observed since that time, and it is to be feared some mishap has overtaken one or both of them during the autumn or winter season.

T. H. NELSON.

THE DEGENERACY OF FOXES.

WE hear a great deal from hunting-men nowadays of the degeneration of foxes. We are told that they neither run so straight nor so far before hounds as in the days of our fathers. This complaint comes not only from those countries where, owing to shooting interests being paramount, few old wild foxes are preserved, and the stock of foxes, when not actually consisting of imported ones, is made up chiefly of inexperienced, hand-fed cubs, but also from the Midlands, where the fox is of importance, and pheasants are few. From some of our most carefully preserved and best countries comes the complaint of short-running and unenterprising foxes. Probably these complaints are to a certain extent exaggerated; there are so many people who expect more from fox-hunting than it can give. In the earlier weeks of the season, young foxes, without much experience or knowledge of country, naturally run round about the district they know best, and even older foxes, as every huntsman knows, have at that time a tendency to hang about their homes, and to run rings round their favourite haunts. Yet even these facts do not wholly account for the failure of foxes to show sport—a failure we may presume to be undoubted, since so many people of experience aver that it is so.

There is a natural tendency, when looking for the reason of this, to lay the blame on some hostile influence. But it would, I think, be unprofitable if we were to ask ourselves how far we—the followers of the hunt—are responsible for the failure of foxes to run straight and far. It is a question worth considering whether too many foxes are not kept in fashionable countries. I know well, of course, the saying of Beckford, that a man might as well complain of having too much money as of too many foxes in his country. But when Beckford wrote all the conditions of fox-hunting were different from those of the present day. The countries hunted were far more extensive than they are now, and many had no clearly-defined limits at all. The men who followed hounds kept fewer horses in their stables, went out more seldom, endured long draws patiently, and were not indignant and injured at an occasional blank day. On the other hand, when they did find a good fox they never gave him up while he was above ground. A writer of the first half of the last century regards a change of foxes in the course of a run as the greatest misfortune that could happen to him. Foxes were few—too few, indeed; but those that were found were often better and stouter than ours. The modern fox-hunter, on the other hand, is impatient of a long draw, intolerant even of a prolonged check, and positively injured if you ask him to walk after a hunted fox that is some distance ahead. The Master and huntsman, dependent on the goodwill of the field, wish to find quickly; they soon give up a fox if he baffles hounds, and are not displeased if a fresh fox gives new life to the chase. But in order to be able to do this, they must have many foxes. Thus as many litters are bred as possible, the vixens are helped to feed the cubs, and the young foxes are well nourished without much trouble to themselves. The fox cub, when hungry, is a natural sportsman, and he hunts beetles and mice as soon as he is able. No one who has not watched cubs on a summer evening, when beetles are booming in the air and field mice creeping about, can have any idea of the amount of hunting for such small creatures a litter of fox cubs will do. Naturally, if they find a nice, fresh-killed young rabbit or rat they turn their attention to that, and then when satisfied they sleep. Thus, in a carefully-preserved country, where the foxes are too numerous for their natural food supply, they must be either artificially fed or under-nourished, and, in any case, are likely to learn but little about the country round their home. All who have hunted in Leicestershire know that some foxes become hunters of dust-heaps, cadgers in pig-styes, robbers of hen-roosts, and useless for sport. Then there is another disadvantage to sport where foxes are too numerous and carefully preserved—they lose their fear of man. It is, generally speaking, a bad sign when you see foxes in daylight; or, indeed, you see them at all, unless you go to seek for them in order to study their ways. Only those who have tried to observe foxes can tell how difficult a task this is, and how much caution is needed in order to bring the latter, or, still more, the older wild foxes within eyesight or into the field of the glasses. But foxes, in more or less artificial conditions, after a time lose their fear of man, and when disturbed run but a short distance, returning to their old haunts.

It is no uncommon thing in the shires to hunt all day, yet never have a good chase. All begins well; a fox is found very quickly. The pack runs him a little way, changes to another and another. The country is full of foxes; there is not room for them all in the coverts. Many of them are lying out in hedgerows, crowded in trees, or, it may be, on a fine day actually basking in the open. It naturally follows that when the pack, changing from

one fox to another, have run backwards and forwards over the country, every fox is on the move, and, not knowing much country, they dodge about. Hounds hunt first one and then another till at last they catch a tired fox. Everyone is pleased. True, they have hunted several foxes; nor has the hunt been above two miles or so from the starting point; but everyone of the field has seen something of the sport. Men have been riding and jumping in a beautiful grass country all day, and have tired out the horses. It is very good fun, so we need not grumble because it is not something else. Yet there is no doubt that foxes are not so bold and enterprising as we could desire under these conditions.

The real truth is that the foxes are not so much degenerate as we are lazy and luxurious. Men want to hunt five and six days a week, and never to have more than ten miles or less to covert, and almost the same back. Our fathers thought nothing of twenty miles or more. The famous Nimrod was something of a dandy, and by his own confession liked "to do himself well." Yet if we read his own account of the distances he covered in order to hunt, we shall see it is more than most modern fox-hunters could stand. So there must be many foxes in the neighbourhood. If there are not enough cubs reared, then foxes are turned down. This is not a bad plan if it is done in the right way. If it be necessary, owing to local circumstances, to put down foxes, the best plan is to obtain Scotch or Welsh foxes. They should be procured as well-grown cubs, ear-marked, and put down two or three together near a large earth. They must be fed with freshly-killed rats or rabbits, never with meal, still less with butchers' offal, till they are able to take care of themselves. None of them should be hunted the first season.

It is a mistake to turn down little French or Belgian red foxes. They spoil our native breed, whereas I think that if they can be induced to stay, Scotch foxes are a useful cross, and I am sure that in one county foxes have been improved by this strain of blood. But, on the whole, it is best to leave Nature alone. If we will the end we must will the means, and if we want the long runs and the straight points of former days, we must be content to ride longer distances to covert, endure protracted drawing patiently, and have an occasional tedious jog home.

Again, our impatience has a tendency to leave the inferior foxes to live when it is for the best interests of hunting that they should be killed off. There was one fox I knew well. He lived in a wood of some hundred acres or so. He never left it. When hounds were thrown in he would run round and round the covert. Then, if pressed at all, he would go out into the open just far enough to take the pack out of the covert, but he would soon turn back. Naturally with a fox running about like this the ground became foiled, and the field grew weary of the delay. I can almost imagine that fox chuckling as he heard his baffled foes leaving the covert.

The hounds were taken away to draw for another fox. The old fox might have lived till now to waste half a day's hunting every time the hounds were in the neighbourhood had not a new Master come to the country. "Charles," he said to his huntsman, "we must kill that old fox in Bracken Pond" (*i.e.*, Pound, an enclosed place), "if we stay there all day." This put the huntsman on his mettle, and he thought what was best to be done. Then he remembered that there was a point near the top of the wood where the fox often turned, and that a little distance back the fox had to cross a ride. The huntsman found his fox and took him to the top of the wood with a few couple of hounds, but he left his whipper-in with orders to bring the body of the pack to the ride and to cheer them on to him when he blew his horn. This he did when the fox turned, and the whipper-in cheered on the hounds, with the effect that they met the old fox face to face as he came back. As luck would have it it was a fair scenting day. The fox was puzzled; hounds were behind him and in front; he was nearly caught between the two divisions of the pack. He was so startled that he went away at once, and was killed in a small covert four miles away, to the great benefit of sport. Being an old dog fox he kept other foxes away from the covert, but as soon as he was gone another took his place that did not cling to the woods so resolutely. Such home-keeping foxes ought always to be killed as soon as possible, and if some subtlety has to be exercised in doing it, why a fair fox-hunter (and we have the authority of Beckford for saying it) is a foolish fox-hunter. Yet such a fox has a great chance of living, since few masters will, and huntsmen cannot, go against the wishes of the field. If we want longer runs we must be content to have fewer foxes, and rather larger territories, to ride longer distances out and home, and, in fact, to put back the clock. If we will not do this, let us not, at all events, complain of the foxes; they are what we make them, and a hunt has the kind of fox (or some of them have, at all events) that it deserves.

T. F. DALE.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC SALON.

WITH the partridges and purple heather comes the harvest of the photographic year, and at two important exhibitions in London the pick of amateur and professional work which has been produced during the past twelve months is set out for public edification. First in order comes the Photographic Salon, which is now open at the galleries of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, 5A, Pall Mall, and will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 7 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., until October 27th.

Photography is notoriously many sided; it may be merely illustrative or diagrammatic, and in each capacity prove of the utmost utility; but of late years unquestionable progress has been made in the application of photographic means to purely artistic ends, and by artistic ends we mean the representation of a personal impression. It is not that the photographic process has undergone any special improvement making

Although M. Demachy has, for the most part, worked this year in a new medium, namely, the oil process, the same manner and touch is recognised. Absolute liberty of interference with the light-formed image is the fundamental principle of this distinguished French amateur's work, and, be the medium which constitutes the vehicle of the pigment gum or oil, water is applied by any convenient means imparting to the finished result a brush-like appearance, such means of control being in the hands of the incompetent as great a source of danger as they may be of success in the hands of another. "Rainy Weather in Brittany" owes its luminosity and the rich indecision of its aerial outlines to the fact that M. Demachy would have them so, and was able to impose on the mechanically-produced photograph a means of carrying out his will. By much the same means Mr. Malcolm Arbuthnot obtains his effects, his "Launching the Boat" possessing not only a pleasing, sketchy character, but the figures admirably suggesting action and movement. Again, in the same medium, Mr. John H. Anderson



C. Job.

LATE AFTERNOON—SUNLIGHT.

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it more suitable for such an end, nor have men become more dexterous in their manipulation of it, but rather have they acquired a greater knowledge of natural effects, and have cultivated in themselves a feeling for decorative design. Thus, for instance, a simple seashore snap-shot which might have resulted in the most commonplace of photographs, has in the sympathetic hands of its author, Mrs. Fannie E. Coburn, proved a singularly vivid reminiscence of the swish and onrush of the surf up the pebbled beach. One recognises Eastbourne, under which title it is shown; but it is a personal and individual impression of the familiar scene which compels one's sympathy, while the lines of shore and buildings constitute a decorative arrangement of distinctly æsthetic character. Thus might one point to the dual virtues of many another picture shown in which one feels with the producer, and is conscious only upon further consideration that the effect is conveyed by means of an arrangement of masses and lines which of themselves are pleasing to the sense of vision. Mr. Cadby's studies of children, and Mrs. Cadby's well-selected designs of flowers and plant forms, appeal rather by reason of their exquisitely delicate technique; but the former are, at the same time, remarkable as studies of character and expression.

attains a more sombre tone with a scene in which a busy steam tug with its train of barges struggles and tosses on the sun-glinted waters of the dark river. Dear to the heart of an island people are marine subjects, and in this class of work Mr. F. J. Mortimer has long held a prominent place. Readers of COUNTRY LIFE are familiar with Mr. Mortimer's studies of the curling breakers and glittering spray of huge waves breaking on the shore; but Mr. Mortimer has been more ambitious, and has given us representations of fishing smacks and a square-rigged ship riding on the high seas.

The Santa Maria della Saluta has so often been depicted by photography that Mr. Arthur Marshal's representation is doubly welcome on account of the original treatment and personal aspect. Veiled in atmosphere, this exquisite structure looms poetically through the grey, as one might imagine it at early dawn, and is most aptly entitled by its producer "A Venetian Pearl." Mr. Marshal's other works, which are all hung together, well sustain the merits of the one just referred to. Mr. Fred H. Evans has before given the public examples of his tasteful craftsmanship, rendering sunlight between the columns of a solemn interior, or glancing on castle

walls and casting broad shadows, and once again he shows with what consummate skill he can do these things, his "Sunlight and Shadow—Mont St. Michel" being, perhaps, the most refreshing. A very important position is held by Mr. Alex. Keighley as one of the few who still uphold and practise the more academic methods. All four of his large pictures, but especially "The Bridge" and "The Almshouse Well," are unquestionably photographic, and keep well within the recognised limits of the process, yet are they as undoubtedly pictorial in the highest sense, and stamped with the individuality of their producer, as every artistic production must be. In each case is there an instance of alertness to grasp a fine subject, and subsequently, by exercising reasonable control, to bring the composition into obedience to artistic canons. With Mr. Keighley as representing the English school of landscape or genre subjects are Mr. Horsley Hinton, whose large landscape, "On the Moors," occupies the place of honour at the top of the room; Mr. Charles Job with a very beautiful rendering of sunshine, "Late Afternoon—Sunlight"; while Mr. A. H. Blake has several pictures of somewhat the same order, the sombre mystery of "The Tate Gallery," with river reflections, being as romantic a rendering of a

claim to be regarded as a personal artistic method as etching or lithography—and that, we take it, is the lesson its promoters desire it to teach.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

READERS of fiction will have noticed with no small satisfaction that the number of good novels issued this season already is considerably beyond the average. None of them may possibly attain to the very highest rank of fiction, but there has been quite a little library of most interesting and readable romances already published. In proof of our assertion it will be sufficient to allude to the very fine novel published by Mr. W. B. Maxwell, the new work by Mr. Hichens, Miss Mary E. Mann's slight but delightful study, and now we have to notice Miss Cholmondeley's latest book, *Prisoners* (Hutchinson). While it retains the characteristics of her previous works, it may be said that this book is far in front of anything she has previously accomplished. It has been conceived with dramatic boldness and ingenuity, and it is



M. Arbuthnot.

LAUNCHING THE BOAT.

Copyright.

London view as his autumn is suggestive of the poetry of life in the country. Prominent among the American contingent is Mr. Alvin-Langdon Coburn, who displays great originality in his selection of subjects about the Liverpool docks, where the prow of one vessel or the rudder of another is used as a foil to soft atmospheric vistas of rippled water and drifting steam. Contemptuous of physical facts and the conditions which may exist in Nature, Mr. Coburn, with an originally correct negative, will, for purely decorative effect, compel his printing process to yield blacks such as never were for intensity, rejoicing the heart of the technician as he leaves the painter critic dubious. In other ways Mrs. Gertrude Kasebier, also an American, brings a trained perception and striking originality to bear upon her use of photography, and achieves results which would hardly have been recognised as being by any known graphic means a very few years ago. Given a complete mastery over the process, and a knowledge of all its resources, and coupled with it an artistic instinct and an intimate acquaintance with the effects and tonality of Nature, and it is hard to say why such work as is shown at the Photographic Salon has not as much

worked out admirably in every detail. The story begins with a very original situation. An English girl, Fay Bellairs, whose character is the chief study in the book, has become married to an Italian Duke in a way common enough among the class to which she belongs. That is to say, there is a certain amount of mutual attraction between the couple, but there has also been a careful consideration of mutual advantages. Between a somewhat elderly bridegroom and a young bride there is not, however, the ardent affection which might have occurred between two people of the same age. Fay meets a young man with whom she had had a boy-and-girl love affair, and her old feelings at once revive. When he is about to leave she asks for a final meeting, and here she loses control of herself, and is just gasping inaudibly, "Take me with you," when a movement as of stirring bees is heard in the house, and Michael at once meditates escape. But Fay says, hoarsely, "If you go down now, my reputation goes with you." The result is that he hides behind a screen, and is there arrested for a murder that had been committed in the garden, going willingly to prison rather than that the fair name of the girl should be soiled.



R. Demachy.

RAINY WEATHER IN BRITTANY.

Copyright.



A. Horsley Hinton.

ON THE MOORS.

Copyright.

It is in the delineation of this young wife that Miss Cholmondeley shows her power. The girl is shallow, selfish, and heartless to the extent that she allows her lover to make this awful sacrifice without saying the word that would have saved him. Under the Italian law he is sent to prison for fifteen years, and much of the novel is taken up with analysing the guilty feelings of the woman during his captivity. And here the novelist is simple and natural to a degree. The subject she had to deal with is neither a fiend nor an angel, but a very ordinary and commonplace piece of humanity, who would not willingly hurt anybody or anything, and yet has not courage enough to run any risk to herself for the purpose of saving another from what turns out to be a cruel ordeal. She undergoes a prolonged trial, and very ingeniously are the incidents arranged to bring home to her, bit by bit and point by point, the effects of her egoism. At first, naturally, it is her husband that she fears; but, on his deathbed, he lets it be known that he had seen the situation clearly from the beginning, and had formed his own judgment on the egoism that would allow an innocent young man to suffer the horrors of an Italian prison rather than that she should be put to inconvenience. But when she becomes a widow, and is therefore freed from this menace, Fay still shrinks from taking the decisive step. As is the way of her kind, she showers blame on all who have had even a remote connection with the event. The Italian officials meet with her reprehension because of their want of ability to unravel the truth out of this mysterious occurrence, and she baays herself up with the hope that the true murderer will be discovered and her lover set free without any interference on her part. In a word, she is the female egoist "writ large." Yet misery overtakes her.

Oh! if only Michael were dead and out of his suffering, then she would never be tortured by them any more! Then too her husband's words would lose their poisoned point, and she could thrust them forth from her mind for ever.

"Francesca, how much longer will you keep your cousin Michael in prison?"

Oh! cruel, cruel Andrea! Vindictive to the very gates of death.

Down the empty whispering-gallery of ghostly fears in which her life crouched, Michael's voice spoke to her also. She could hear his grave, low-toned voice, "Think of me as in fairyland."

That tender, compa-sionate message had a barbed point which pierced deeper even than the duke's words.

Her lover and her husband seemed to have conspired together to revenge themselves upon her.

Fay leaned her pretty head against the window-sill and sobbed convulsively.

Poor little soul in prison, weeping behind the bars of her cell, that only her own hands could open.

It has often been a theme for the cynic that gratitude counts for little in love. Human nature is so constituted that the man or woman to whom we are indebted becomes from the very fact less agreeable as a companion or a friend, and Fay's mind gradually comes to look upon her imprisoned lover as a kind of incubus of which she would like to be rid. While this is going on there appears very frequently on the scene a brother of Michael's, Wentworth, also a very keen and trenchant study in egoism. He is one whose whole thoughts are concentrated on himself, with the one exception that he has more than a brother's love for Michael, who had been thrown upon his care in childhood. Wentworth to a considerable extent is simply the masculine of Fay, with certain finer qualities thrown in, and it is inevitable that the two should fall in love with one another. Wentworth is the solitary individual to whom Fay can speak frankly and freely, without *arrière-pensées*, and she gradually comes to take the keenest pleasure in his company. Yet her guilty remembrance presses down until it seems to squeeze the very spirit out of her, and she is driven to confess, first to her sister Magdalen, and then to the Bishop. Meantime Michael is undergoing in prison a mental torture far more painful than any

physical suffering can be. Very effectively does Miss Cholmondeley describe the reception by Michael of the letter in which the state of affairs is disclosed. He had always believed that she would come to him, and especially so now that the Duke, her husband, was dead. He was allowed to receive only two letters a year, and when that from Wentworth arrived, he dreaded to open it.

He dreaded to open it. He should hear she was dead. He had known all the time that she was dead. That flower-like face was dust.

With half-blind eyes, that made the words flicker and run into each other, he sought through Wentworth's long letter for her name. Bess the retriever had had puppies. The Bishop of Lostford's daughter had married his chaplain—a dull marriage, and the bishop had not been able to resist appointing his son-in-law to a large living. The partridges had done well. He had got more the second time over than last year. But he did not care to shoot without Michael.

He found her name at last on the third sheet, just a casual sentence.

"Your cousin the Duchess of Colle Alto has come to live at Priesthope for good. She has been there nearly six months. I see her occasionally. At first she appeared quite stunned by grief, but she is becoming rather more cheerful as time passes on."

The letter fell out of Michael's hand.

"Rather more cheerful as time passes on."

Someone close at hand laughed a loud, fierce laugh.

Michael looked up, startled. He was alone. He never knew that it was he who had laughed.

"Rather more cheerful as time passes on."

He looked back and saw the months of waiting that lay behind him—during which the time had passed on. He saw them pieced together into a kind of map—an endless desert of stones and thorns, and in the midst a little figure in the far distance coming toiling towards him under a blinding sun.

It is no wonder that he beat his manacled hands against the wall until they bled, and broke his teeth against the chains. If Fay had come to him then he would have killed her. Eventually the murderer is found, or, rather, comes forward, and he is set free; but by this time another great sacrifice is asked of this much-enduring man. His love for Fay had returned despite the evidence of her want of heart, and next to her the person he held most dear in the world was Wentworth, so that in the final scene of the book he is called upon once more to perform a feat of self-abnegation. It would be unfair to go into the particulars of the novel in such a manner as to spoil the interest of the reader. But the end is very effectively told when death, who breaks through many bargains, comes at last to the relief of Michael.

Fay's voice reached him, pressed close to his ear, like the sound of the sea, held in its tiniest shell.

He opened his eyes, and his brother's white face came to him for a moment, like sea foam, blown in from the sea of love to which he was going, part of the sea.

"Wenty!" he said, and smiled at him.

And like blown foam upon a breaking wave, the face passed.

And like the whisper in the shell under the hush of the surge, the voice passed.

The shadow which we call life—passed.

We have said enough to show the quiet and effective contrast that is drawn between the two brothers, Wentworth, the egoist, and Michael, the unselfish hero. The women are brought forward and grouped with equal skill. Fay's sister is the opposite to her in nearly every respect, and a character in fiction that any novelist might be proud to have created; while the third sister, Bessie, though she acts no very important part in the drama, is sketched with a firm hand, and is herself, despite her brusque manner and unattractive looks, a lovable and interesting young woman; but, as a matter of fact, in the whole gallery of portraits there is not one that we could wish away. Miss Cholmondeley has created a world and an atmosphere that ought to delight even the most jaded reader of novels.

SHOOTING.

CHAMOIS-DRIVING IN AUSTRIA.

CHAMOIS-STALKING retains its place as the very acme of sport. Powers of endurance, nerve, and climbing capacities are as necessary attributes to success as a steady hand, clear eye, and unerring aim. The spoils may be few in comparison with the fatigue and toil to be endured, but the satisfaction of killing a chamois after a laborious stalk is undoubted. Chamois-driving, on the other hand, requires no nerve, no powers of endurance, no "clinging on by one's eyelids," so to speak, over precipices where a false step may precipitate one into some bottomless abyss. In driving, it is the chamois which would seem in need of those qualities enumerated above, which in stalking properly belong to the sportsman. The "gun" merely takes up his position commanding some pass which he hopes the driven chamois may follow, and for two or three hours waits, keenly alert and listening for the slightest sound, or examining with

his field-glass the far-off outline of the mountains. *Quai* driving, there is no form of sport so entrancing as this, nor one in which success is more uncertain, nor where the game has a better chance of escape. In eight times out of ten the chamois, when he does come within shot, offers a running target only; any moment the wind may veer round and disclose one's presence; the buck has to be picked out if possible—no easy task with a running chamois—and there are besides scores of routes by which the game may come, most of which will take it out of shot or sight. It will therefore be understood that the chamois has every chance, even without taking into account the fact that he offers a small mark and can very easily be missed. Not the least delightful part of chamois-driving is the grandeur of the surroundings, and the three or four hours alone with Nature in some wooded solitude, or on some height commanding a panorama of splendid Alpine scenery. The particular shoot at Johnsbach in Styria, belonging to Count

Tassilo Festetics, where the writer has shot annually for many years, is one of the best and best organised in Austria. From 100 to 150 chamois and a few stags are killed in three or four weeks' driving, and the "rifles" never number more than five, and are generally three in number. The immense extent of the property enables a new drive to be taken every day, and scarcely ever is the same taken twice in a season, although identical ground is often covered by a part of the beaters. Every evening the shoot for the following day is arranged, the beaters being timed to start at daybreak, and the guests about 7 a.m. or 8 a.m. A ride or walk of a few miles is required to the respective "stands," which are often many thousands of feet above the level of the sea. The beaters, who are in touch with "stops" posted on given eminences, await the firing of a rifle by the head-keeper in order to start. The stops take up the firing, and from crag to crag over the valleys communicate the signal to the far-distant line of beaters, who then advance, occasionally firing blank cartridge. The drive itself usually lasts three or four hours. If the rifle happens to be allotted a high stand it is possible to watch with a strong field-glass the whole operation from its very inception. The stops or "Auswehler" can be made out on every commanding pinnacle of rock, and soon the tiny specks, which are the beaters, can be detected slowly advancing and ascending or descending slopes which one can scarcely imagine even a chamois negotiating with safety. As the first signal-shots reverberate over the mountains, they wake from their noonday slumbers the old solitary bucks, and disturb little parties of grazing chamois, which cluster, poised in orthodox fashion, on the sharp-pointed rocks, bewildered by the strange sounds which portend the coming danger. If the wind be favourable, the animals will come forward, and generally down towards the guns, being prevented by the stops from breaking out to the right or left. The field-glass now plays its part in the day's work, and there is nothing more interesting than watching the movements of the chamois as they come nearer and nearer to the stands, each gun speculating as to whether the line of their flight will bring them within range. Their wonderful agility, the sure-footedness which never seems to fail, the art of seeing without being unduly seen, render the sight a most fascinating one. The fact of the three or four rifles being far distant from one another admits of a large field for shooting, and although many chamois pass between the stands out of shot, or unseen by any of the guns, nevertheless, with the long-distance rifles and telescope-sights of to-day, the possibilities for long shots are numerous. Austrians most



F. Fankhauser.

THE START.

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frequently use for chamois-shooting sporting Mannlicher or Mauser rifles, or carbines of 8m.m. or 9m.m., and most of them use telescope-sights, which, magnifying the game, make bull-eyes possible at distances which otherwise one would not think of even attempting. The telescope-sight must in time revolutionise shooting, and its effect in Austria is seen already in the larger bags obtained, especially of chamois. As regards game-shooting generally in Austria-Hungary, the writer, who has had, perhaps, a larger and more varied experience in that country during the last fifteen years than most Englishmen, cannot speak too highly of the standard of excellence of the majority of Austrian rifle-shots. He considers them as far above the average English rifle-shots as the latter are superior to the former with the shot-gun. In rifle-shooting the Austrian stands alone, and it is scarcely to be wondered at in a country where during seven months of the year a rifle can be, and is, constantly used at every sort of game—stag, chamois, wild boar, roebuck, not to mention the capercaillie, which is stalked in March with rook rifles. The average Englishman who fires a few shots at Scotch stags in the course of the year cannot be expected to compete with the Austrian, whose rifle is practically one of his household goods, and whose handling of it is an almost everyday occurrence from his boyhood up.

The individual bag which a gun may obtain at his stand depends, of course, on many circumstances. Should the wind be unfavourable he may not get a shot at all—a very common occurrence—or he may be visited only by some inviolable doe with a kid; or he may miss; but given favourable circumstances, by which are meant good wind, good position, and fairly easy shots, it is possible to bring down as many as eight to ten chamois, and even more. The record at Johnsbach is twenty-three to one rifle at one stand. The number of chamois which, during a drive, pass within shot of the guns is small compared with the number of those which either break back or pass between the stops, in spite of the incessant firing of blank cartridge and the pandemonium of weird cries which fill the air; but the writer counted on one occasion this year as many as eighty which were visible during a drive.

EDWARD A. STONOR.



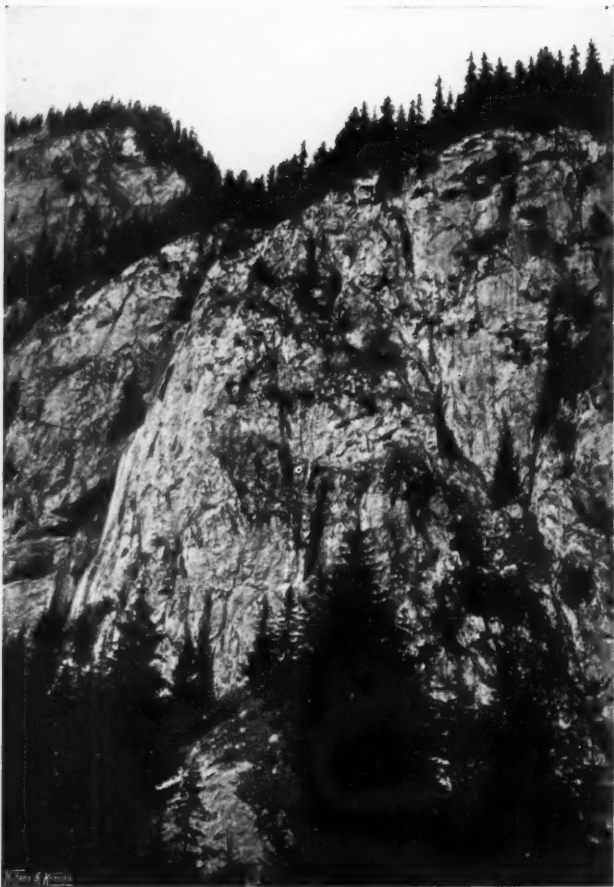
F. Fankhauser.

AFTER A DRIVE.

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PARTRIDGES AND "ENTERIC."

PARTRIDGES in some parts of Scotland, as in Morayshire and Banffshire, seem to have been suffering very heavily from a disease which appears as if it must be the same which has caused the death of so many birds in Wiltshire. There it is spoken of as "gapes," but in Scotland we find it called a species of enteric, such as has been so terribly fatal to pheasants.



F. Fankhauser.

A CHAMOIS PASS.

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No doubt nobody knows precisely the mode of its action, or its cause, and still less its cure; but there is no doubt whatever that it is a great help to the birds if good drinking water can be supplied them, so that they are not driven to drink microbe-infected stagnant water. Accounts of the grouse continue to be received showing them rather better, generally speaking, than was anticipated, and already we hear of good bags being made the second time over, more birds being seen than on the first shoot, which is, of course, the result of second broods coming into the bag which were too small to fly readily or far when the first beat went over the ground. Even Lanarkshire is showing good, although very partial and local, bags, and this in that part of Scotland which the snow was thought to have punished most severely, so far as the grouse stock went. Yet in parts of that county we hear of more birds than usual being seen and killed. Of the Banffshire partridges, on the contrary, it is said that there is but one to ten of last year.

DANGER OF OVER-SHOOTING.

There seems to be a great fear that more shooting will be done in the Eastern Counties than the stock of birds now on the ground will stand, and that the future of the partridges may be seriously affected by it. This is a fear which is freely expressed by some very good judges, and especially by those who are not shooting their own ground at all. It is pointed out that in a year like the present, speaking of those parts on which there are virtually no young birds, it is still quite possible that fair bags may be made, on the first shoot, out of the very fine stock left at the end of last season. But they will be bags composed entirely of the old birds, and they will mean a great shortage in the stock for the year to follow. Very similar fears have been expressed about the grouse by those who are the most careful in nursing their stock; but the results are coming out for the most part so much better than the keepers and others had apprehended, that perhaps in the case of the grouse this fear is generally dispelled. With the partridges it remains unchanged.

GUN-HEADACHE.

Just now, in the thick of the shooting season, there are many who are suffering from that distressing form of trouble in the head which is called "gun-headache," and which makes the victim tremble and shrink from every discharge of the gun. No doubt part of the trouble comes from the noise of the discharge; but there is no doubt, too, that much of it is due to the vibration directly communicated from the stock of the gun to the shoulder and thence to the brain of the firer. Of course, there are all the well-known alleviations, such as india-rubber-padded

stocks, to lessen the jar of the recoil, and reduced loads will help to the same effect, though, of course, with a correspondingly ill influence in lessening the force of the propulsion of the shot. But the best help of all consists in holding in the mouth, between the clenched teeth, while shooting, a small piece of india-rubber. The teeth are kept clenched on the india-rubber, and this seems to lessen the jar to the upper jaw, and thence to the brain, not a little. It is as well to tie the india-rubber with a string to a button or button-hole, both for handy carrying and ready use, and also as a means of extracting it if it should be incautiously swallowed, as is reported to have occurred, in the excitement of the moment. It is really a great help, and such a simple one that none who suffers from gun-headache ought to neglect it. It is not claimed for it that it is an absolute safeguard against gun-headache; but it will often have the desired effect. Attention should be paid to diet, as biliousness has often as much to do with the headache as anything else.

ON THE GREEN.

OVER-CROWDING AT ST. ANDREWS.

THERE is evidently something not quite right about the golf at headquarters—that is to say, as it is hardly necessary to explain, St. Andrews. The golf is all right when you get it, and the green is all right; the trouble is to get the golf. The green is perhaps better than it has ever been before at this time of year, and this when our Southern greens have been burnt by the drought till "green" was no proper name for them. Some folk say that the St. Andrews greens are too green; that there is too much grass on them; that they have been dressed and seeded until they are turned into lawns rather than golf putting greens. No doubt they are much heavier than they used to be, speaking of the majority of them; and no doubt their character is slightly altered in the direction which is indicated by the respective words "lawn" and "putting green" thus set in contrast; but the answer—which is quite sufficient—to be made to those who cavil at them is that, with the amount of play which they have now, they would not stand at all if they were in the ideal condition of the putting green, which is so much to be admired where it can be maintained. They would have been worn and crumbled away to pieces long ago. That is a good answer; and, after all, the greens are very good and true, and it is a man's own fault if he does not putt well on them. Also the going through the green has been much improved; some side hazards have been cut, with a result which is, in my humble judgment, altogether good. The golf is delightful when you can get it; to get it is the trouble. This is a statement, again, which requires a little explanation for those who have not seen, and suffered from, the facts. The facts are these: that in the most populous season—say August and the first half of September—the green is crowded and congested with women and children of all sorts, sizes, and conditions, most of them rather cheap trippers from the big towns. It happened lately that a match of two scratch players was kept back by a foursome of small children in front, and this foursome was preceded by a man of immense age in a tall hat, his middle-aged daughter, and the latter's youngest son playing a three-ball match. And they have every right to be there—that is the trouble. There is an old charter, or whatever the right term is, imposing on a



F. Fankhauser, THE LODGE, WITH HOCHTHOR IN BACKGROUND.

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certain portion of the links "a servitude for golf"—this is the phrase that the legal people seem to have for the permission—and though this charter is, in the opinion of some, over-ridden by the recent Act of Parliament which regulated the relations between the St. Andrews town and the Royal and Ancient Club, still it appears that there is no power in the hands of the town to impose a tariff for play on the old course; that is to say, to make people pay, say, a shilling a day, as at North Berwick, Leven, Ely, and other public links, unless the Royal and Ancient Club fail to keep up the links in good condition. The shilling a day at North Berwick is charged for playing over a certain part of the course, which is private. I do not believe that even there it is legal to charge a shilling for play on this side of the first wall. However, the shilling for the crossing of the wall assuredly has an effect in keeping the tourist and the tripper with his family off the trans-mural district, and in discouraging the poorer sort from coming to North Berwick at all. The resulting difference is very striking, for whereas at North Berwick all the better houses are eagerly rented, at St. Andrews they stand unlet during the busy golfing season just because people know that the links there are so crowded with all sorts and conditions that members of the Royal and Ancient Club and the like respectable persons and self-respecting golfers cannot, sometimes, get a round during the day on the old course. And do not let anybody go away with the idea that we are pleading a special class privilege. That is not the idea. The members of the club bear all the expense of keeping the green up—that is nothing. But what is something is that most of these people know something about golf, they can appreciate the qualities of such a course as the old classic green at St. Andrews, whereas these other little people would be really just as happy on the Jubilee course or elsewhere.

The only way, as far as one can see, out of the present *impasse* created by the Act of Parliament coming on top of the old charter, is that the town and the club should put their heads together, that the town, by collusion, should declare that the links were not being kept up properly by the club, and that declaration apparently would create at once the condition of affairs in which, according to the Act, it can proceed to impose a tariff. At present it does not seem that the town is very kindly disposed towards the imposition of the tariff. It has an idea that it best consults its interest by letting the course be free to all comers, and thus attracting all. But the aspect of the unlet houses and so on is likely, after a while, to have its effect on minds which are not at all of the kind to be oblivious of main chances. It will impress them with the fact that the attraction of all and sundry means the repulsion of those who would do the place a great deal more good both financially and otherwise. Somebody said once that truth is great and will prevail, and so it will if the conditions are suitable; and for the ultimate recognition of the truth of this matter there could not be more convincing conditions than those unlet houses.

BETTER ARRANGEMENTS FOR WELSH CHAMPIONSHIP.

ONE of the Welsh papers expresses approval of the remarks made in a recent issue of COUNTRY LIFE on the not altogether satisfactory way in which the arrangements for the big meetings within the Principality appeared to have been conducted, some of the most important being held at the same date, so that the best players were naturally unable to attend both or all of them. The comments in the Welsh papers go further; they give an explanation of the reason of this unsatisfactory state of things, and, what is much better, they point out that there is cause to think that it will be remedied. Apparently a certain dissatisfaction with the Welsh Union controlling the entry to the amateur championship of Wales led some Northern clubs to start a championship on their own account; but it now appears that the Union, recognising that all is not as it should be, has agreed to meet some at least of the requirements of the Northern clubs, and that in consequence all is to be "peace and plenty" for the future, and there is to be no more collision of important meetings.

HANDICAP COMPETITIONS AT ST. ANDREWS.

Once or twice of late we have been noting that St. Andrews has departed from its old tradition in holding one or two handicap competitions during the year, besides the old-established medal meetings in spring and August. It is a further sign of the times that on the agenda paper for the general meeting of the Royal and Ancient Club, which is to be held on Tuesday next, before the medal day, there is the following "Proposal by certain members as to additional handicap tournaments." There is a non-committal vagueness about this, which tells us hardly anything of the nature of the proposal; but perhaps we may fairly assume that the proposal is rather in the direction of instituting yet more of these handicap tournaments than of checking those which are

already established. The "additional" might, it is true, be taken to imply merely those which are already additional to the old meetings in spring and autumn. But this is a meaning in which we put no faith, believing rather that the intention is to increase the number of these competitions. It is to be expected that the meeting will negative the proposal, but with a general meeting "one never knows."

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

SOME GOLFING STORIES.

THE best golfing stories are all in the Scottish vernacular. They are like a delicate *soufflet*, with a slightly pungent flavour; and unless they are effectively told both in point of accent and with a skilful revelation of the dramatic motive which inspires them, the result is sure to be flat and disappointing. The stories largely illustrate the humour of the caddie, and though they may suffer a little from a lack of refinement and elegance, their pithy forcefulness and point are undeniable. The humour of the Scot, indeed, is symbolised pretty accurately in the majority of those stories which have been preserved as illustrations of the caustic repartee of the caddie while a game is in progress on the links. Like the intellectual product of most grave and serious-minded people, the Scottish caddie has, by his wit, long earned the renown of being a master without equal in a special kind of mordant repartee, which is as difficult to translate as it is impossible to catch in all its shades of intonation when one seeks to transplant it for future use. The humour is dry, pungent, sometimes almost insolent, free and independent in its personal rebuke, and accompanied withal by a vividness of phrasing which shines for the moment like the flash of a burnished scimitar in the sunlight. There are, of course, many good English stories connected with the links



ASHDOWN FOREST: TOWARDS THE FIRST GREEN.

which have a peculiar flavour of their own, and they can always bear to be retold. Such a story, for example, is found in the little Sunday incident on an Essex green when a member asked his caddie whether he had ever been hurt by a golf ball. The boy said that he had never been hurt himself, but that he knew another lad who had a "Silvertown" ball driven hard against his leg, and on looking down at his trousers he was astonished to find the word "Eureka" plainly printed on the cloth!

The stories of the Scottish caddies fall, as a general rule, into three classes. They either reveal the fondness of the old type of caddie for his liquor, a certain swift and keen faculty of divining the weaker side of his employers, and a most resolute disinclination to bestow praise upon the master's game, even where it is deserved. Of the first category an illustration is afforded in this incident: "Give me my flask," said a golfer to his venerable caddie when the far hole out had been reached. "Michty forgie me!" exclaimed the caddie, taking the flask out of his pocket; "the cork maun hae cam oot o' th' bot'l, for there's no' a drap in't." Another story of the same kind is the reply which the golfer received to his enquiry as to what the weather was likely to be, and whether "the glass was going up." "I dinna ken onything about the gless gaun up," said the thirsty one; "mine's jist gane doon." Those are little personal foibles, however, that need not be dragged unnecessarily into the light to-day; for the old type of caddie, who loved his liquor too well, but not wisely, is on the road to rapid extinction. It is as a critic of the game that the independence of his character and the pungency of his retorts make some of his sayings still reverberate among the rafters of the club smoking-room. On one occasion, in Fife, there was a very enthusiastic but

very bad player, who taxed to an incredible degree the patient willingness of his caddie. The player missed the ball, dug out huge divots, made the boy bring them back and replace them, drove his ball alternately to cover-point and square-leg, and, indeed, anywhere except on the fair green. At last, the ball lay in a ghastly cuppy lie, and being quite well pleased with what he had done hitherto, the player, with the sweetest complacency in the world, asked "Weel, laddie, what am a' tae tak' there?" (meaning what kind of club.) The disgusted caddie replied: "Weel, sir, tae tell ye the honest truth, it disna' maitter a d— what ye tak'!" That kind of sardonic humour, moreover, is no respecter of persons, for once the late Lord Salisbury came under the caddie's lash for his ineffective method of playing golf. The late Conservative statesman was staying with Mr. Balfour at Whittingehame, and was taking golfing exercise at the holes on the lawn in front of the mansion. In swinging the club, however, Lord Salisbury hit the turf more frequently than the ball, until at last, when one of the shots, striking deep into the turf, caused his arms to tingle, the statesman asked: "What have I hit that time, boy?" "Scotland," was the grave reproach of the caddie.

Reverent restraint for the golfing weakness of his employer has never been a characteristic of the Scottish caddie. The touchstone of his esteem is the man who can swing his club gracefully and rhythmically and drive a long ball throughout the match. Thus, when a player one day kept on skying his balls off the tee, thereby losing a great deal of distance, the caddie at the next tee, as he patted down the sand, took his master severely to task by handing him the driver with the injunction, "Noo, sir, let's see a guid shot, and nae mair o' yer Glory Hallelujahs." Perhaps the injunction was dictated by the fact that the caddie had a bet of a few bawbees on the result of the match. It is quite a common incident among the Scottish caddies; and his prudent economy may have been rather alarmed at the repetition of what he picturesquely described as "Glory Hallelujahs." "Tak' care, sir, there's money on this mautch," whispered a Scottish caddie as he sidled up to his master when the game was all square with 4 to play. The match, however, was lost at the last hole, and the employer, wishing to indemnify the caddie for his loss, asked the boy how much he had lost. "Oh," said the boy, "Wullie an' me had a penny on't!" Of stories about Andrew Kirkaldy there are a large number floating about—rich, rare, and vivid. But his interview with the sergeant-major of his regiment at Simla when, as a time-expired man, Andrew obtained his discharge from the regiment and came back to Scotland, is worth repeating. With kindly consideration Andrew was asked what trade he intended to follow when he got home to Scotland. "I'm gaun tae play gowf, sir," was the reply. As Andrew had never been seen with a golf club in his hand during the years he had served as a soldier, the question was somewhat incredulously asked "Can you play golf?" "Aye, a wee bit." "Well," was the rejoinder to Andrew's declaration, "I'm afraid you'll not make much of that; try something else." The year after Andrew returned home from soldiering he tied for the open championship at Musselburgh.

THE ASHDOWN FOREST LINKS.

THE Royal Ashdown Forest Club, founded in 1889, has now 420 members. The holes on the course vary in length from 120yds. to 490yds., the soil is light, the lies are excellent, and the bunkers are natural. The links are in a lovely part of Sussex, about 400ft. above the level of the sea, and, owing to the undulating and diversified character of the ground, the views of the landscape are ever changing, and the round is never monotonous. There are two features about Ashdown worth mention—there is Sunday play, but no caddies; and Mr. J. Lionel Kidpath, an old Wimbledon and Sandwich golfer, has endowed the fine short "Island" hole with a sum of £5, the accruing interest to go to the player who succeeds in holing that difficult hole in one shot at the Easter, Whitsuntide, or autumn meetings. A. J. ROBERTSON.

SEA-ANGLING FESTIVAL.

THE well-attended sea-angling festival at Hastings and St. Leonards might serve as a model for all such enterprises. How far these gatherings, attracted by the promise of legitimate loot, are admirable from the pure and simple standpoint of sport, need not be here discussed. Such views are always in great measure personal. The present writer has never fished in a festival, and, in all probability, never will do so; but he has no wish to press an individual prejudice as common precept. If these monster competitions are necessary—and they seem to be—it is well that they should be conducted fairly and above board, as was undoubtedly done at Hastings on this occasion. One and all, the secretaries and stewards worked with judgment and alacrity, and the result of their efforts was most satisfactory, as both an advertisement of the town and a function for the benefit of those who favour such contests.

That the catch was not better from the piers may be mainly attributed to the time of year, as well as to the prejudicial effect on sport in bright, shallow water of a great crowd of fishermen. In fixing their annual carnival as early as September the committee were, no doubt, driven to the other extreme of season by the inclement weather experienced last November, when all three days were marked by an incessant downpour. Yet I think the pendulum was allowed to swing too far forward. The middle of October,

while still warranting expectations of fine weather, generally sees the whiting and even the first of the cod, well in shore; and it should not, in that month, be necessary to fix so low a pass measurement as 7in. for flat fish and gin. for round. It did not amuse me, when judging at the St. Leonards Pier, to be compelled to admit a skate that weighed, if I remember right, less than 2oz.; and a conger of 10in. is a grisly infant that should surely have been spared to wriggle a little longer through life. Even "silver" eels of that length, of which several were weighed in on the piers—they work along the coast from Rye Harbour, and I can recollect catching them off the Hastings groynes twenty years ago—are not creditable captures. The committee could not, in September, well have raised the minimum, for there would, with a little more rejection, have been only two fish—a bass and a grey mullet—fit to count at all; and, as it was, I doubt whether more than a dozen of returnable size were caught in all as the result of the labours of a hundred anglers during these days.

Apart from this small, and I admit in the circumstances unavoidable, blemish, the pier competitions went merrily, thanks in great measure to fortunate weather and the philosophic contentment of those who took part. Perhaps I might suggest a slight modification of the rule which disqualifies all fish not landed by the owner of the rod. It seems hard that a lady cannot leave her rod without somebody removing the first fish from the hook. In one case I was compelled, much against my inclinations, but in deference to the rule, to disqualify an eel, which, had it not been taken off the hook, would have remained on it until the return of the owner. I therefore venture to think that the committee might go a little further, and, in order in some measure to protect competitors against this interference, debit any of them who remove a fish from another rod with the weight of that fish, which would be deducted from their total available for a prize.

In the boats sport was of a much higher order. Here also, no doubt, it would have been better a month later, but an average of 5cwt. a day is not despicable for between eighty and a hundred rods, particularly when it is remembered that, what with getting to and from the grounds, there remained only three or four hours for fishing. On one of the three days only did a very slight lull, combined with the heat of the sun, cause distress in a few wayward stomachs, notably in that of a popular comedian, who, when I found him crouching over his rod on a corner of the pier, in an attitude not unlike that of Jessop when he is set for a century, looked the very picture of discontent. He had been out in the boats the day before, and was so ill that he discreetly chose the pier for his second essay; and his woe-begone expression, which lacked the humour so familiar in his professional moments, reminded me forcibly of Ovid's gibe:

"What did you want with the sea? Could you not have been content with the land?"

The start of the boats was managed with admirable punctuality each morning. It is no small undertaking to embark a hundred fishermen and one lady with in 3min. of time, yet that margin was on no occasion exceeded, and the bell rang from the Harbour works, and the boats, bristling with rods and buzzing with conversation, shot out from the uncovered sands and, with the exception of one or two, were rowed smartly in the direction of the best fishing-grounds off Fairlight. The return was as prompt as the start, and within 10min. of four boat after boat was grating on the beach—they had left at low water; they returned on the flood—and the occupants jumped out on the shingle slope, glum or gay, according to the weight of their fish bags. Load after load of slippery conger, flat fish, wevers, minus their dangerous fins, and a few, a very few, whiting, mackerel, and gurnard, were emptied on the tables, weighed, measured when doubtful on specially graduated wooden rests, and entered on printed forms. There was nothing remarkable in the way of either large fish or rare kinds. A conger of 15lb. cannot be accounted a prodigy, and even a 4lb. plaice is nothing rare, while not more than half a dozen species were represented. Indeed, the piers, poor as was their aggregate, afforded greater variety. History has given us a Battle of Herrings; the Hastings Boat Competition was a Battle of Congers, for these mainly determined the issue.

The entire competition was got through without a single challenge or complaint, though these have not been unknown in former years, and everyone was seemingly satisfied, particularly the winners. Nor was a little somewhat open rivalry between the clubs, a case, perhaps, of Southend *versus* Rest of England, carried beyond the bounds of good feeling.

The rules for the boats were somewhat more carefully framed than those for the pier events. A far higher standard was described, each kind being specified. The rule which I like least was that of allowing the attendant fishermen to bait the hooks. The baiting of hooks is a part, and no small part, of the art of fishing; and to permit the fishermen to do this is to establish a competition among them and not among the amateurs themselves. F. G. AFLALO.

LITERARY NOTES.

IT may seem almost a paradox to say so, but there is more of Charles Lamb in the new book by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *A Wanderer in London* (Methuen), than in the same writer's *Life of the gentle Elia*. The latter was a laborious compilation of facts relating to Lamb's history; but in the book before us Mr. Lucas has caught the very spirit of his master. Although Lamb is scarcely mentioned, we can almost imagine that it is he who goes wandering through the London streets, lamenting the changes, looking at books and pictures, and ever expressing himself with a quaint attractive humour. His gentle lamentations over the substitution of petrol for the patient and friendly horse, the reckless march of utilitarianism and luxury, and the fact that "there is an architect round the corner ready with a florid terra-cotta tombstone for every beautiful, quiet, old-world building in London" will meet with a great deal of sympathy and approval. And yet Mr. Lucas has a fine eye for the picturesque, even in the midst of change, as witness the following:

"There is nothing out of Méryon's etchings more impressive than our contractors' giant cranes can be—fixed high above the houses on their

scaffolding, with sixty vertical yards of chain hanging from their great arms. Against an evening sky, with a little smoke from the engine purpling in the dying sun's rays, and the mist beginning to blur or submerge the surrounding houses, these cranes and scaffoldings have an effect of curious unreality, a hint even of Babylon or Nineveh, a suggestion, at any rate, of all majestic building and builders in history. London has no more interesting or picturesque sight than this."

He says whimsically, yet not without earnestness, that the sadden change in the shops of London is in the chemists', and the greatest in the tobacconists'. Instead of the old chemists' shops, "with a row of coloured jars such as poor Rosamund lost an excursion for," we have windows stocked all of drugs and patent medicines, and the element of bustle has entered even into the chemist's life. It is a cause of mourning to Mr. Lucas that the wooden Highlander who was once as necessary and important to the dealer as Returns and Rappee as is the figure of Buddha to a joss-house, is now a discarded sign. There is one tobacconist in Tottenham Court Road and one in Euston Road who still set the Highlander on the pavement. The tobacconist's shop of to-day is not a place to lounge and gossip in, as it was in the days of yore. You are served over the counter by a brisk young man who scarcely has leisure enough to pass the time of day. We shall be surprised indeed if this book does not become a treasure to those who love London, and we ought to add that it is ornamented by illustrations that are fully worthy to be set beside the text of the writer.

Mr. Robert Hichens is one of those novelists who generally display originality in their work, and *The Call of the Blood* (Methuen) is no exception to the rule, except so far as the title is concerned. It bears somewhat too close a resemblance to Jack London's "Call of the Wind." The plan of the novel is fairly simple. A very wholesome and well-drawn Englishwoman, who is approaching middle life, and who has no physical beauty to boast of, falls in love with a man who has that in which she is lacking, a very handsome appearance. Indeed, it is drilled into our minds *ad nauseam* that he is like a Greek god, a Mercury, and all that is beautiful in masculine humanity. But he has Sicilian blood in his veins, and, unfortunately for her happiness, it is to Sicily that the bride wishes to go for her honeymoon. While there she is called away to nurse a friend in Africa, and during her absence the Sicilian blood makes itself felt in her husband. He falls quite naturally into the ways of the peasants, and is soon involved in a *liaison* with one of the prettiest of them, whom he betrays. Her father, a half-savage fisherman, pays the score off with his knife. Thus we have a very thrilling story that dawdles to some extent in the earlier chapters, but races off like a motor-car towards the end. The tale is powerfully told, but it does not leave a very pleasant taste in the mouth.

Anyone who wishes for a book for a rainy day can scarcely do better than obtain *Prabbles and Prabbles* (Skeffington), by the late Major-General Patrick Maxwell. The author seems to have been one of those who constantly read with a note-book, and he had no fear of the "terrible people who know everything," so that he wrote down what interested him or what stimulated his very learned and ingenuous mind. In one page he demolishes the

character of "Pius Æneas," and in the next discourses learnedly of the homeliness of the women in old Greece—how Nausicaa and her high-born maidens washed their clothes with their own hands, how Andromache gave provender to the horses of her husband. Then we are whipped away to a discourse on the magnificent earnings of those authors who fled the time away in the golden age of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The poor author's eyes well may water when he hears of the glorious single cheque for £20,000 which the Longmans paid Macaulay for the second and third volumes of the History of England. Sir Walter Scott got a fortune of £18,000 for his Napoleon. In the short period between November, 1825, and June, 1827, he is said to have made by his magic pen the sum of £26,000. What a contrast do we find here to the case of Miss Austen, who sold the manuscript of "Northanger Abbey" to a bookseller in Bath for £10. But no subject holds our attention long, and very soon he has whisked us away to that very alluring subject, printers' errors. Some of those he notes are simply fatuous, as that in the Bible printed in 1612, "Is there no blame in Gilead?" He tells us of a report which said "The bride-maids wore handsome dresses, the gift of the bridegroom." He notes that a clergyman put the following startling statement into a letter addressed to one of his friends: "Last Sunday a young man fell from one of the benches in my church while I was preaching in a shocking state of intoxication." In the course of one of his speeches, Archbishop Whately happened to refer to the people as "the masses," but it came out in the report as "them asses." Mr. W. E. Forster, speaking in the House of Commons, described the militia as "our great constitutional force," but the reporter changed it into "farce." He rejoices, too, in the mistakes of librarians, as, for instance, that German who catalogued Rider Haggard's "King Solomon's Mines" under the general heading of "Alltestamentliche Litteratur." We must quote the following as a further example:

"Among other publications of this class is one called *The Reference Catalogue*, which professes to serve as a guide to buyers and sellers of books. A strange guide, truly, and itself in some need of guidance, since, not long ago, its index contained the following delicious morsel under the heading of 'Lead':

Lead, copper in
" kindly light (Newman)
" metallurgy of
" poisoning, etc., etc."

We might go on for a long time giving examples of the curious things gathered in this volume. As we have said, it is a book to dip into at a time of enforced leisure. You can scarcely open a page without coming upon something of interest.

Under the title of *My Dog*, M. Maurice Maeterlinck has written a charming booklet, translated into English by A. Teixeira de Mattos. Incidentally M. Maeterlinck shows that he would have made an excellent journalist. The little bulldog was only six months old when he died, and it is a feat of ingenuity to have composed so many fables about the puppy. It is, indeed, mystical stuff, and those who go to it for doggy stories will be disappointed.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WEASEL AND RABBIT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph of a weasel approaching and feeding upon its prey is, I believe, unique—in the course of a long experience of photographing wild birds and animals I have never come across anything similar. There is an old adage about catching a weasel asleep, but it is a thing which is exceedingly rarely accomplished, and I have only had the good fortune to do so once in my life. The way in which I obtained the photograph was as follows: Mr. Green, head-keeper to my friend Mr. Richard Hill of Thornton Dale, Yorkshire, some little time ago shot a weasel crossing a road carrying something in its mouth, and on going to pick it up found the object it had been carrying was a weasel, about a fortnight old; he brought it home, put the little animal in a cage and reared it, where it may be seen in a more or less tame condition to-day. To enable me to obtain the photograph a dead rabbit was placed on the ground near a tuft of thick grass, which I carefully focussed, made all ready, and laid in wait with a short string attached to the trigger of my shutter. The cage containing the weasel was placed near the rabbit, and the door was opened. Soon the little animal came out, but so shy was she and so stealthily did she creep about in the long grass, ever on the alert for the slightest movement or sound, that it was only by the exercise of a considerable amount of patience that I managed to obtain what I required, and I had to be very quick, as her movements were exceedingly rapid. We have in the broad-acre county an expression which runs "as wick as a scoperell," which being interpreted means as lively as a betotum or top, and a weasel is, indeed, when watched at close quarters the same of lithe, graceful movement; nothing can exceed the playfulness of these little animals. Jinny rolls herself into a ball, tumbling over and over in sheer enjoyment of life, rushes round and round after her tail till you would think she must be utterly dizzy, and jumps high in the air, performing the



most extraordinary antics, till you would really think she had gone mad; then she retires for a while into her soft bed of bracken; but if you think she has gone to sleep you are mistaken, for you will see her keen little bright eyes peeping at you through the leaves. As will be noticed, this particular weasel has a white spot on the nose, and a long, white streak down the back of the neck, peculiarities which, out of the many animals of this species that I have at various times examined, I have never noticed before. If annoyed by anyone, Jinny comes to the door of her cage and chatters away in a most amusing manner. She has not been handled lately, and to do so one would need a thick pair of gloves, as her teeth are like needles — OXLEY GRABHAM.



DEMOISELLE CRANES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph of a pair of demoiselle cranes (*Grus virgo*), who have successfully reared two young ones here this spring, may interest your readers. The so-called nest, in reality merely a scraping, was placed among some rough grass about 300 yds. from the house, and close to a sheet of water. Here these two birds evenly divided the tedious process of hatching, and through a glass might easily be discerned changing guard, the newcomer each time turning the eggs before covering them. When at length the little fellows were hatched, their parents could be seen marshalling them about, always carefully walking on the outside, the little ones trotting between, their time spent in eating insects and flies, which the old birds caught and killed, and then gently gave them from the tip of the bill. These birds live out all the winter without a shelter, and are perfectly healthy. They are very tame, and will eat from the hand, Indian corn and wheat being their principal food. But a Marie biscuit is what they really enjoy. The young birds are now as large as their parents, but still lack the white headress and the brilliancy of more mature plumage.—H. E. McD., Wigtownshire.

AN INTERESTING NEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I discovered a few days ago a very interesting thing here. I found a wood-pigeon had built its nest in a snailpit and in a rabbit burrow from which rabbits were continually coming and going. The nest had apparently been made in a nook of the hole, so that the rabbits in passing did not go near the nest. It was not a rock-pigeon's nest, for on taking the young out you could see that they were wood-pigeons. You may or may not believe this strange story, but if you do not I can get four or five witnesses to prove what I have said, as I showed them myself.—R. WOBIDGE-GORDON, Ellon, Aberdeen-shire.

[Was the bird not a stock-dove?—ED.]

SWALLOWS IN CHURCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The following may interest some of your readers: In the summer of 1904, two swallows persisted in building a nest on one of the beams in a little old church attached to the house. As it was just above where people knelt, it was thought advisable to keep them out; but, if a door or window was accidentally left open, even after a lapse of three or four days, in they came at once and resumed building. Last year the same thing happened; but, as the family were away for a fortnight or so, they were kept out. Not to be entirely baffled, they built a nest in a curious way flat against the church door. The ordinary custom is to build under eaves, or in a corner or angle. Unfortunately, the nest was deserted, in consequence of a large concourse of people passing through the doorway during an afternoon. This year they again partially succeeded in building in the same place inside the church, on the beam; but, as they were again shut out, they resigned themselves to the nest built last year on the western door, where they have now hatched out their young in peace, and their little yellow beaks can be seen this afternoon peeping out of the nest.—G. M. DE TRAFFORD, Haselowe Hall, Tamworth.

LAVENDER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to your note on lavender in your issue of the 8th inst., I would add to the list of its virtues the fact that it will cheerfully flourish in very poor and sandy soil. In fact, lavender objects to richly-manured ground, and if it happens that the soil is rich and heavy, chalk or lime must be added. The lavender bush is a familiar feature in cottage gardens, and there is a tradition that where it flourishes the wife will be the

ruling spirit of the household. I am glad to say that the lavender-seller, with his old cry, is still to be heard. The simple words and curious tune form a delightful contrast to the usual cry of the hawkers in our streets. I heard "Sweet Lavender" at Putney last year and this year in Brighton.—E. J. DURRANT, Reigate.

DESTROYING WASPS' NESTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I notice in your issue of September 8th a letter about potassium cyanide powder used for destroying wasps. As you, in a footnote, say it is most dangerous, why use such a substance when all this kind of pest can be effectually got rid of by pouring ammonia over their nests? The vapour of ammonia is absolutely fatal to all kinds of insects. The strongest ammonia is not necessary; it is more convenient when diluted with an equal volume of water.—W. R. HODGKINSON, Blackheath.

CHURCH BELLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Some weeks ago I read an account, I think in *COUNTRY LIFE*, of a new method of repairing cracks in church bells without having them recast. If such a notice appeared in your paper, I shall be obliged if you will let me know the number it was in; or, if not, perhaps one of your numerous readers may be able to oblige me with the name of the firm who undertake this work.—C. G. H. HAMILTON, Dalserf, Netherburn, N.B.

AN OLD SIGN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is a long time now since goods of any kind were disposed of At the Sign of the Ship or At the Sign of the Mitre, but the photograph sent herewith, which is by Mr. Harrison Speight of Rugby, will recall to the minds of many a state of things long passed away. It represents a sixteenth century sign of a village grocer and tallow-chandler at Cultworth, Northamptonshire. The figures represent a sugar loaf and a bundle of candles, or "dips," as they were called.—G.



AN OLD SIGN.

BIRDS IN EAST ANGLIA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you or any of your readers kindly give a list of birds which may be said to sing in East Anglia during the month of September? —A. B. SAYCE, Ovington Rectory, Essex.

A STRANGER'S VISIT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with great interest the letter from Mr. R. D. Dering about the American bluebird. Last year, some time in June, I was staying in Hampshire, and was shown by my host's groom the stuffed body of a bird which the man had shot a few weeks before. It was quite unfamiliar to me, and when I returned to London, I went to the Natural History Museum, and there identified it as the American bluebird (*Sialia sialis*). Is it possible that these American birds are finding their way here, or do they escape from captivity?—J. R. HARDING.

A CURIOUS IMPROVISED SAFE AT LANDERMERE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose herewith an interesting photograph by Mr. Agate. It represents an old oven at Landermere in the King's Head Inn, and shows the books, Bibles, etc., used for the church services held in the inn on Tuesday afternoons during winter by the Rector of Thorpe. It has, so to speak, been changed from an oven into a fireproof safe. It seemed to me that it could scarcely fail to interest your readers.—B. K.

